The design of this icon depicts the Theotokos, a most beautiful blossom of heaven, standing among the flowers of paradise. Her Son is visible above her in the clouds, the King of heaven and earth. Along both sides of the icon, framing the Mother of God, are suppliants asking for her intercession. She stands with her arms spread open and her head tilted as if listening. The tenderness and kindness of a loving mother are evident in her face. She stands in paradise and yet among us.

Commemorated:
July 23, October 24, and November 19
The Antiochian Orthodox
Christian Women Of North America

His Eminence, the Most Reverend JOSEPH,
Archbishop of New York
and Metropolitan of All North America
and Hierarchical Overseer

NAB Board

His Grace Bishop. JOHN, Spiritual Advisor

Officers:
President: Dianne O’Reagan
Vice-President/ Project: Kh. Suzanne Murphy
Recording Secretary: Sheryl VanderWagen
Treasurer: Fadia Juzdan
Public Relations: Melinda Bentz
Immediate Past President: Violet Robbat

Coordinators:
Constitution & Bylaws: Lauren Farris
Humanitarian: Dorothy Tampary
Membership: Mary Lou Catelli
Parliamentarian: Anne Bourjaily-Thomas
Religious: Kh. Dannie Moore
Scholarship: Cindy Nimey
Finance Committee: Laila Ferris
Widowed Clergy Wives: Deana Bottei

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.

PUBLICATION GUIDELINES:

Deadlines

• Please submit your articles by the first of the month
prior to the month of publication so we can ensure they
are included.

To submit articles, e-mail as a word attachment to:
antiochianwomenna@gmail.com

Submission Details

• Please include your name and the phone number where
you can be contacted for questions.

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 each issue we will 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 Founder,
Metropolitan PHILIP of blessed memory, it is
“Theology in Action.”

To read the DIAKONIA online, or for general
information regarding the Antiochian Women,
please go to the Antiochian Women website at:
http://www.antiochian.org/women
To read past issues of DIAKONIA, go to:

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

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

Born into an Orthodox Christian family in north Lebanon, in 1956, His Grace attended Tripoli Boys’ School and after passing the Lebanese Baccalaureates I and II, enrolled in the American University in Beirut. Due to the Civil War, he was unable to continue his education in Lebanon, and instead moved to the U.S. to attend the University of North Texas, from which His Grace graduated with a B.A. in 1978 and an MBA in 1980.

In 1981, Bishop ALEXANDER returned to work in Lebanon, for a company that imported raw materials for factories, until October 1985 when he returned to the United States to work as a supply manager at Prince George’s Hospital in the Washington, D.C. area. In 1993, His Grace worked for a local company that exported medical supplies to the Middle East, and then in 1995 was hired by Federated Stores to work as a sales associate for Bloomingdale’s in Rockville, Maryland. It was during this time that he wrote to Metropolitan PHILIP of blessed memory, requesting his blessing to enter seminary. He was directed to attend St. Vladimir’s Theological Seminary in Crestwood, NY, from which he graduated in 2000.

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

Troparion - Tone 3

Initiates of Heaven and teachers of divine truth,
You faithfully tended the Church of Christ,
Holy Alexander champion of the Trinity,
John the son of grace and Paul the crown of bishops.
Together we all praise you.

Kontakion - Tone 8

Burning with the love of Christ and taking up the yoke of His holy Cross,
You became imitators of His life and communicants of His divine glory.
O divinely wise Alexander, wondrous John and glorious Paul,
Standing before His throne, pray fervently for our souls.
Welcome to the Diocese of Ottawa, Eastern Canada & Upstate New York. We are led by His Grace Bishop ALEXANDER, and our Diocese includes 17 churches and missions in Canada, (from Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Ontario) all the way to Upstate New York.

Géhane (Ephtimios) Zahran – President

I am honoured and feel blessed to be serving the Antiochian Women of our Diocese of Ottawa, Eastern Canada & Upstate New York (AW-DOECUNY). This past year, my first, was about learning and fostering new friendships with my sisters in Christ. I am meeting wonderful Ladies from all over North America, each and everyone bringing an unmeasurable richness into my life.

I was born in the Orthodox Faith and was baptized at St. Nicholas church of Port-Said (Egypt) under the blessed name of Christina. It seems like yesterday, when 42 years ago I married the love of my life George. We decided then to move to Canada, and to settle in Montreal. We did not have children of our own, but were blessed with the love of so many!

St. George Church of Montreal has since been my parish. I served on the Adoption committee, Sunday school with Kh. Souhaila El-Murr, and with my friend, Christine Meimari, we started a co-ed Scouting movement, while all the time serving with the Antiochian women; first as corresponding-secretary, secretary, president, and today as the communications’ officer.

I have been enjoying my retirement for the past 6 years. In my professional career, I have touched on many fields but the one I cherished the most was my last job for 27 years as Legal administrative assistant in a Youth center; an experience that was worth living as it touched on the lives of kids and families in many ways.

Since my very tender years, I learned from my parents that volunteering was a way of life. I cannot think of a better place to live the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ, about love, respect, forgiveness, fellowship and friendship. May we always see the face of God in each other so that we may deserve the love of God!

Hala Zakaib – Vice-President

I am blessed to serve as the Diocese of Ottawa’s Antiochian Women Vice President, a wonderful opportunity to both serve on the diocesan board and to get to know all the amazing and hard-working Orthodox women in our archdiocese.

Though I have been part of the Antiochian Women for a long time now, I have only recently taken on official roles. I served as vice president on the chapter level for two years at my home parish, St. Nicholas Church in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, before serving on the diocesan level.

I am married to Eric Zakaib, a man who like me was raised in a religious Orthodox home. Together, we have two wonderful children, Myriam and Nicholas, who in turn are both very active on both the parish and diocesan levels. I was a stay-at-home mom for most of my children’s upbringing, devoting whatever time I had for work to the Church, doing things from working in the church office to baking the Phosphora bread. Now, along with my continuous commitment and participation in the Church, I teach Arabic to elementary and high school children. I look forward to continuing to grow in Christ with all of you, my sisters, and look forward to reading your biographies to get to know you as well. God bless!
Nadea Saikaley – Recording Secretary
Born and raised in Ottawa, Canada. I am the eldest of six siblings. My parents came to Ottawa from Lebanon in the very early 60s, both from small villages. Since joining the Antiochian Women at St. Elias Cathedral Ottawa seven years ago, I have been very active in the various events we organize. As much as I love to volunteer and do this from my heart for our patron St. Elias, it was truly an honour to receive the St. Elias Antiochian Orthodox Cathedral Volunteer Award this year.

I have three biological sisters, but have gained more sisters and friendships that will last a lifetime. I am happy to serve as the recording secretary for our Diocese since being elected in 2013. I have worked for 30 years at the Ottawa Hospital in various departments/divisions for various specialists and continue to work as an administrative assistant. Travelling is one of my favorite past times.

Susanne Saikaly Zeidan – Treasurer & Immediate Past-President
As a life-long Parishioner of St. Elias Cathedral in Ottawa, I grew up in a Christian environment. From an early age, I remember so clearly attending Sunday School, picnics, and many Feast Day celebrations, especially for our patron Saint Elias. My grandparents and my parents were involved in our local church and we grew up knowing it was our responsibility to continue their legacy. Through the church we have been blessed with many friends and a large Orthodox family. It has been an honour to serve as Treasurer and President of our Diocese, and meet many women from the different regions. St. Elias Cathedral is a wonderful part of our daily life.

In 1947, my father at the age of 15, emigrated from Lebanon, and brought with him a strong Orthodox base. My mother converted to Orthodox when she married. I believe because she was not born Lebanese, my father made sure we knew our heritage; therefore, we traveled to Lebanon many times as children.

Dimitri and I met in Ottawa, married in Lebanon and moved to the USA, where we had two of our three children. Upon our return to Canada, while working full time and raising our family, we maintain a close connection with our Church family. We are involved with the operations of our Cathedral and have worked on every committee for the many fund raisers, conferences, and have held several executive positions. I have been actively involved with the Antiochian Women of our Cathedral all of my adult life.

Currently, I am the Treasurer of our Diocese, and was a two term President of the Antiochian Women and prior to that, I held the position of Treasurer for another 2 terms. My husband is also very active on the Diocese and Archdiocese level. Dimitri has held the position as, Chair of the Diocese for the Order of St. Ignatius and was elected to the Board of Trustees in 2011.

As a family, we have attended many of the Parish Life Conferences and Archdiocese Conventions. When we can fit it in, we travel to Lebanon to visit family. Our three children are in Post Graduate Studies. Katya, Krista and Marcus were raised in the Church, and have devoted many summers to Camp Transfiguration as campers, then councilors. Previously, Katya was the Program Director of Camp Transfiguration, and has spent a few summers working on staff at the Antiochian Village, after having been a volunteer for many summers. We receive much encouragement, support and love from Abouna Ghattas and Kh. Helene Hajal. I feel we are truly Blessed.
Faye Thomas – Religious Coordinator
A parishioner of St. Elias Cathedral, Ottawa for 43 years. I am a convert to Orthodoxy and am forever grateful to my home parish for welcoming me to Orthodoxy.

I gained much of the knowledge of Orthodoxy from teaching Sunday School and coaching the Bible Bowl teams for many years, and being Religious Coordinator for the Antiochian women at the parish level. What a wonderful opportunity my parish gave me to grow in knowledge and faith.
On a personal note, I have been married for 43 years, am a mother of 4 and a sitoo to 10 grandchildren. How God has truly blessed me!

I am currently serving the Diocese as Religious Coordinator; I have previously served as Recording Secretary. All of these opportunities have given me the chance to grow in faith, love, knowledge and sisterhood. My thanks to all.

Lianne Nimy – Humanitarian Coordinator
I am a 39 year old Italian mother of Amelia Rose who is 5 1/2 and Matthew John who is 2 1/2. I was born and raised Catholic, attended Catholic Schools and have always loved church. I remember being a young girl and walking myself to my neighborhood parish every weekend. I was very upset when my home parish closed.

In 2006, I met my husband Matthew and was introduced to Orthodoxy. I had never heard of the Orthodox Church before I met him. I enjoyed my visit to St George and wanted to learn more about the faith. The more I learned, the more I knew it was the perfect fit for me. Meeting my husband opened up a whole new world for me. God, as always, provided the path and the rest in history. In the past 10 years I was Chrismated, married and gave birth to two beautiful children whom I am proud and blessed to be raising Orthodox.

My mother-in-law, Cindy Nimy, was NAB President when I met my husband so it didn’t take long until I attended my first winter meeting at the Antiochian Village. While at the village I met so many wonderful women, some of whom are still active and do so much for their parishes. I began attending meetings at my church and became acclimated and active very quickly. I served as my chapter’s President for 3 years but stepped down after my son was born.

Having a 3 year old and 5 month old gave me a reason to cut back a little. I am however still the Sunday School superintendent and the Secretary for our chapter’s women’s group. I commit as much time as I can to the ladies group and our endeavors. I am also the Humanitarian Coordinator for our Diocese. This role gives me the opportunity to attend diocesan and national meetings semi-annually if life permits. I thoroughly enjoy attending all of our annual functions, especially the PLC. Every year I meet more amazing Antiochian women and take pride in our sisterhood.

Being an Antiochian Orthodox Woman is not something you do for a little while and then stop. It is who we are and what we do all the time. May God grant us the strength to continue all that we do.
Khouryee Suzanne Murphy – Scholarship Coordinator & Diocesan music Director

Kh. Suzanne Murphy is the wife of Fr. Gregory-Lazarus Murphy. They serve as the clergy family of St. Michael’s Parish in Geneva, which is in the Finger Lakes area of Upstate New York. Kh. Suzanne and Fr. Gregory have been blessed with four children: David, his wife Ani, and their daughter Ekaterina Marina (Ina); Aaron, Adam, and Moriah.

Fr. Gregory says that Kh. Suzanne and he have a true “team ministry” at St. Michael’s: she is the director of the choir and the sole chanter of the parish, so she is at every service, either chanting or leading the choir (or both). She also serves as his liaison with the Church School faculty, and with the Antiochian Women. She also looks forward to accompanying Father when he visits the elderly and homebound, especially when he brings the Holy Mysteries, as he values her help in singing the service with him.

In the secular world, Kh. Suzanne also has a full-time job as an elementary music teacher in the Geneva Public Schools. She also teaches in the Academic Intervention/Reading Recovery Program of the Geneva school system, where she helps “at risk” children to keep pace with grade-level reading. When they lived in the Boston area before coming to Geneva, Suzanne was named a “Teacher of Distinction” as one of the faculty members of a “National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence.” She was also named as one of the “40 Outstanding Teachers in the Arts” by the Boston Symphony Orchestra Education Outreach Committee, and the Massachusetts State Department of Education’s Massachusetts Cultural Council.

Since moving to Geneva, Suzanne has also been an Adjunct Faculty member in the Music Department of Hobart & William Smith Colleges, where she teaches voice. Additionally, she is a faculty member of the St. Peter’s Arts Academy, which is a private arts school serving the greater Finger Lakes area. Suzanne also sings in local and regional ensembles, including the Hobart and William Smith Colleges Chorale, the Syracuse Vocal Ensemble, and as the alto soloist in several productions sponsored by The American Landmarks Concerts Series. She recently sang the role of “The second lady” in Mozart’s The Magic Flute with the Geneva Light Opera Company. Suzanne has also been grateful to be a long-time member of the Boston Byzantine Choir.

In her spare time (whenever she can find any), Suzanne loves to knit and make handmade gifts for her family and friends. She feels blessed to be able to serve as the NAB Vice-President and also the Diocese’s Music Director.

Louise Salhany – Public Relations & Membership Coordinator

My maternal great-grandparents emigrated from Beirut, Lebanon in the late 1800’s to Portage River, New Brunswick, Canada; my father arrived in Montreal, Canada in the early 1900’s from Rashaya Al Wadi, Lebanon. My parents met and married in Montreal, in 1942. I was born, raised, and educated in Montreal, and I have a daughter, Bruna, who is very involved in our Diocese and parish, and has been since she’s 17 years old—a long, long time ago!

I grew up being very involved with the Teen Soyo chapters in Montreal. My introduction to the Antiochian Women was through the warm welcome of Magda Younes Zakaib and the Ladies of St. George, Toronto, Ontario, where I learned to deeply embrace our Antiochian Orthodox faith, and was quickly welcomed as a member of the community: I taught Sunday school for several years; was president of my local chapter for six consecutive years; and was appointed Recording Secretary and Social Events Coordinator for the 1997
Louise Salhany continued: Archdiocesan Convention (Ladies meeting and luncheon; 600 person boat cruise—we actually had three boats cruising Lake Ontario! And all youth activities for which I introduced the now standard lower priced ticket book).

During those same years, I was also the Antiochian Women’s President for the CanAm Region (1995-7), DOECUNY’s predecessor. It was during my mandate that the regional Antiochian Women’s Scholarship was initiated, with the assistance and profound efforts of Kh. Helene Hajal, and the blessing of Metropolitan PHILIP of the thrice blessed memory. Though more than 20 years have come and gone since I was regional President of the Antiochian Women, I met many wonderful ladies throughout our region/diocese and Archdiocese, and am still in contact with many of my sisters in Christ.

I am eternally grateful to Fr. Iskander, Magda, and all the parishioners of St. George Toronto for welcoming my daughter and I into the church family because without their example of love, acceptance, and inclusivity, we would have missed having you in our extended family.

Holding Onto the Truth

A Word from His Grace Bishop ALEXANDER

In his second epistle, which we read on the Feast of the Transfiguration, St. Peter reminds his readers that they are “established in the truth”. St. Peter emphasizes the need for believers to be firmly grounded in the essential truths of the gospel to which he is an eyewitness.

The apostles are very concerned that the churches be steadfast in holding to sound doctrine. In his first and second letters to Timothy, St. Paul charges Timothy to “guard the deposit that was entrusted to you”. Elsewhere, he tells him that deacons “must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience”. To Titus he says, “you must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine”.

Nowadays, when people search for churches the criteria they look for in a church are the programs it offers. They seldom look for a church that teaches sound doctrine or dogma. The predominant belief is that doctrine is often divisive and not inclusive and that people will know we are Christians by our love. No doubt love is part and parcel of being a Christian but faith does also matter for our salvation and not just any faith but the true faith in Jesus Christ.

We live in an ever-changing postmodern world and we tend, even as Orthodox Christians, to be swayed and influenced by the pervasive thinking that there is no absolute truth. Our church teaches that absolute truth lies in God, the Holy Trinity. Jesus says that He is the Truth. The Symbol of Faith that we recite at every Divine Liturgy contains this absolute truth. To protect it, the fathers of the church have formulated a canon that makes it unlawful “to bring forward, or to write, or to compose a different Faith”. Why? Because this true faith saves us and any deviation from it jeopardizes our inheritance of the Kingdom of God.
Fr. Maximos Saikali is a graduate of the famed Balamand University-Monastery, where he encountered his classmate and future wife Rita Addoul. Balamand Monastery has existed in Northern Lebanon for nearly a millennium, as monks built Balamand Abbey in 1157 AD. In concert with a life of prayer, the monks cultivated the soil, wrote and copied manuscripts, and hosted guests who sought refuge. Today, Balamand is a distinguished seminary.

Fr. Saikali was ordained to the priesthood over 30 years ago by the highly esteemed Metropolitan Constantine (Papastephanou) pictured with Fr. Maximos at the right.

In 1991, Father and Khouriyee Saikali answered the call to shepherd the flock of Saint Antonios in Halifax, Nova Scotia. They arrived with two young children, Milad and Maria (soon to be Dr. Maria Haddad), and established their family in this loving community midst. They would have three more children: Anthony (co-founder of the Campus Medical Response Team at Dalhousie University), Stephanie, and Elianna (DOECUNY Junior Division Oratorical Judges Choice), all of whom set an example by their deeds.

“Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.” Luke 10:19

The Lord Jesus assures us not to worry and that nothing will hurt us. But is that the fact? Why or why not? We all may believe in the Lord, but do we really trust His word in every day of our lives and in everything we do?

We may also ask ourselves, how we can live a peaceful and serene life in today's society, without continuously worrying about our children, jobs, studies, families, church, salvation etc. Having a simple life is the solution, in a Christian word: Asceticism.

Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Matthew 6:25-26

The Lord always directs the answer to our faith and our trust. So how can we trust and strengthen our belief to attain a calm life full of joy and peace?
Such a life is inside us, and what is inside of us is reflected by our outward daily life. Let us exercise a few practical things that the holy fathers advise us to do and see how our life changes:

1. Daily prayer: not necessarily long, but consistent and on time.
2. The Jesus Prayer: on our travels to and from work, school, shopping, sports etc.
3. Reading the Scriptures: one chapter a day, preferably from the New Testament.
4. Reading the life of the saints and narrating them to your children, grandchildren, families & friends.
5. Walking in nature: enjoy the beautiful creation and thank God for letting us know Him, the True God and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Make your life a simple one, and everything will be simple. Whatever we cannot do, be sure He will do it for you. As He promised, one hair from your head will not fall without His permission.

Let His will be done in your life, and put your will on the cross. By this I mean crucify your will, for only then will Christ fully abide in you. And at that moment peace, joy, patience, wisdom, and life in its fullness will be yours.

Do not miss the crown and power that God is offering you. Be heavenly as your Father is heavenly.

Message from the Diocesan President
Géhane Ephtimios Zahran

Antiochian Women meeting at the PLC 2016
Left to right – amongst Members of the Diocesan AW Executive- Fr. Iskander Younes (Immediate Past Spiritual Advisor), His Grace Bishop ALEXANDER, Fr. Maximos Saikaly (Newly Appointed Spiritual Advisor)

"Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner."

http://www.antiochian.org/using-jesus-prayer

When I learned to say the Jesus prayer, I would continuously repeat it without really taking the time to analyse the depth of its words. I am not explaining it here; but rather sharing its impact on me. The name of our Lord in the beginning of the prayer, always struck me as a warning ‘be on guard’ you are going to call upon your Lord, Jesus Christ, you are going to ask God to turn His face towards you, and not only that, you are going to ask him for a huge favour -to do something beyond greatness, just for you- so what have I done to really deserve His attention?!
It took me a long time to weigh the words and every time I recited the prayer, I would see something clearer with the eyes of my soul. Sometimes, I would only start then stop at the first three words and then gaze out and admire the nature around me, right there and then my prayer would turn into amazement... every little wonder gave me hope. Mercy is a gift from God that I need to ask for. He sacrificed Himself for me and now it’s my turn to give something in return. I don’t deserve His love, but to ask for His mercy and offer Him prayers is a revelation about His greatness. I realize that the more I ask, the more He embraces me and make me see things clearer! I ask for mercy and in return I am given light and my eyes open up to a wonder that I don’t feel I deserve. My Lord is powerful with His love, merciful and kind, and by saying the Jesus Prayer; I feel that I am still but at the very beginning of my soul cleansing.

Why am I sharing these thoughts here today when I so feel unworthy to teach anyone about Jesus and prayer?! The only reason is that when I mentioned earlier that “every little wonder gave me hope”, I was also thinking of my Sisters in Christ. I have learned to open the eyes of my soul to see and learn about them, to ask for their forgiveness, and to turn my heart to the Lord and to recite the Jesus prayer so that I may deserve God’s love and mercy through them! The Lord led me to where I am today in the DOECUNUY to learn that Mercy needs work, work needs understanding and love, love needs willingness to forgive, to give and to cherish every moment and every person that has been put in my path. May we all see the face of God in each other so that we may deserve the Mercy and Love of God!

***

Thank you Fr. Iskander (Younes) for watching over us forever and welcome Fr. Maximos (Saikaly) for taking us under your spiritual wings. Thank you Sayedna ALEXANDER for overseeing our well-being. God grant you ‘thrice’ many many years!

Thank you, Louise Salhany, DOECUNUY Public Relations’ Coordinator, for your tireless work on this issue of the Diakonia. God Bless you always!

**Parish Reports and Photos**

**St. Antonios – Halifax, Nova Scotia**

Many fundraising events were held during the past year, and these include a fish luncheon (money collected at this event was all donated to the monastery in New Germany, $1,500.00 in all); decoration of Palm Sunday candles ($650); preparation and selling of meatless kibbe ($600); Zaatar luncheon sales ($1,277.50); an Easter breakfast, and a luncheon for the visit of a Russian bishop. Moving forward, our main concern for now is our annual Lebanese festival. Once it is over, we will move forward and plan the rest of the year.
Artoklasia Service: is offered by the AW Executive
To start the Ecclesiastical year for the health & salvation of all the women of the church, their family members, and in memory of their departed loved ones.

The MID-LENTEN LUNCH-EON: cooked in our kitchen, an event for the benefit of the NAB Project

We visit the elderly once a month at the Cedars’ Home

We support the Four Homes of Mercy in Jerusalem, Palestine

“Food for hungry campaign“ Donations received at the Madayeh Dinner are sent in full to the Archdiocese;

Special Syrian Emergency Fund to purchase beds, mattresses & food vouchers.

IOCC/NAB “Emergency Kits” the AW jointly with the Youth, their parents and Sunday school teachers, prepared, packed & shipped 100 school & 150 health KITS.

St. Barbara Bake-A-Thon & Mega Christmas Bazaar – funds are donated to support our church.

“Walk for a cause” is the 5th Annual Walkathon. This year funds were raised and donated in full to the Multiple Sclerosis (MS) chapter of the West Island. Every year the AW of St. Mary Montreal, support St. George Walkathon.
St. Nicholas – Montreal, Quebec
The success of the AW of St. Nicholas Church has been due to the help, dedication and generosity of all our women, as well as the support of our parishioners, generous donors, and the continuous support of our Parish Council.

Throughout the year we have successfully organized these following events: Feast of St. Nicholas Brunch (220 attendees!); Ladies Christmas dinner; Christmas réveillon; mid-Lenten luncheon; Palm Sunday bake sale; Easter réveillon, and a closing dinner. We have also purchased a fridge, tables, and table cloths for our newly renovated Hall.

Our humanitarian activities include sponsoring an orphan girl in Lebanon; visiting shut-ins in their homes, hospitals, residences, or nursing homes, and sent 82 Health Kits to IOCC to help the Syrian refugees. Our sincerest thanks to Fr Mark Wyatt for his patience, spiritual guidance, and support.

St. George – South Glens Falls, New York
This past year was very rewarding for the Ladies of St. George, as we enjoy working together in various ways, utilizing our different talents and interests.

Our Knit and Crochet group meets once or twice a month. The yarn workers enjoy each other’s company while creating and then donate their items to local nursing homes, hospitals and those in need of warmth and kindness. Our Dance group meets once or twice a month as well where we get together and have fun. The Sunshine Club sends out good wishes and get-well cards to the ladies who are in need of cheering up. During our meetings we take time to acknowledge those who need a card and pass along the list of names to our designated card writer.

Our annual Food sale/Tag sale takes place in November, and is always successful. Our parish members cooked and baked their ethnic specialties which are in demand. A few of the must haves are Syrian bread, rolled grape leaves, shidrea, baklava, spinach pies, and kourabiedes (powdered sugar almond cookies.) Guests come out of the woodwork, and get there early to have first pick of foods and costume jewelry from the tag sale.

As part of celebrating Christmas, we adopted an under privileged family in our local area. The women were excited to purchase gifts for young children and were very generous. In lieu of a December Ladies meeting, we decided to craft in the church hall with all interested. Children of all ages made a coaster by découpageing a tile and gluing cork to the bottom. The children were happy to add their personal touches. The Ladies Christmas dinner took place at Cirelli’s Osteria, a local restaurant that offers Italian specialties. The turnout was fantastic, just about all our ladies attended, as well as women who are not part of our parish but support our events.

To support our Antiochian Women’s project we host a spaghetti dinner. The meatballs are authentic Italian, homemade in the church kitchen. All look forward to a home cooked meal with family and friends. This event is open to the public and enjoyed by our local community as well. The Ladies again supported our Brotherhood by hosting a Lenten vespers dinner for the Orthodox churches in our area. It is wonderful to see the orthodox of different parishes come together. Our ladies were ambitious bakers this year and baked for an Easter Bake sale which was a welcomed success.

Our future plans include ethnic food sales at other events in the community, a trip to New Skete Monastery and a Lenten Dinner open to the public. We wish you a fulfilling year ahead!
St. George – New Hartford/Utica, New York

The 2016 year began with a great start! We held our first meeting of the calendar year at a restaurant. We try to do this once a year and at this meeting we don’t discuss any of our regular business items. We just relax, visit and enjoy our time together. This year our attendance to this dinner reached an all-time high!!! Many ladies attended and we had a wonderful time just talking, laughing and enjoying some delicious food. Father Nikolai has encouraged us to expand this tradition to more than once a year.

We try to keep our monthly meetings scheduled for the 1st Sunday of the month. This works well for us and helps with attendance. Our meetings generally consist of 7 to 10 ladies. We are blessed to have Father Nikolai and Kh. Jeanette regularly attend the meetings as well.

We continue to hold a Book Club which we take turns hosting at our homes. We have been enjoying the books that we have chosen and also enjoying the time we spend discussing them. To date we have read: Royal Monastic: Princess Ileana of Romania by Bev Cooke; Becoming Mary in a Martha World by Joanna Weaver; the Book of Ruth, and Becoming a Healing Presence by Albert Rossi, PhD.

During March for Antiochian Women’s month, we served as ushers, took the collection during Liturgy and read the sermonette. We held several bake sales and donated $500 toward this year’s project to Feed the Hungry Children. Our Antiochian Women do many things to help support our parish. We help support our Sunday School program by purchasing supplies for Mother’s Day and Father’s Day crafts/gifts, supplies for the children’s activities for Lazarus Saturday and St. Nicholas Day and donate the hamburgers and hot dogs for the end of year barbecue/picnic. We organize and ship school kits and health kits to IOCC at Christmas time. On Sundays after Liturgy, we take turns hosting and providing food and beverages for everyone to enjoy. Father’s Day weekend we are hosting a Blood Drive for the American Red Cross.

Lately most of our time and focus has been spent on helping with the planning and preparation of this year’s Parish Life Conference. There are many things to do and we are doing our best to ensure that all that attend have a wonderful time here in Utica/New Hartford. In a few weeks we will be working together in full force again to prepare for our 5th Annual Mediterranean Festival which was held on Saturday, September 10th and Sunday, September 11th.

Beth Nimey (AW Chapter President), Cindy Nimey (PLC Co-Chair, and NAB AW President 2007-2011), and Rita Hawa Nassef (PLC Co-Chair)
Parish Reports and Photos

St. Elias – Syracuse, New York
During the month of October, we offered cooking classes every Tuesday evening. There was an excellent response. We prepared a luncheon for the parish on October 11, 2015. On Sunday, November 15, immediately following Liturgy, we served our annual Thanksgiving Dinner at which we were honoured with the presence of His Grace Bishop ALEXANDER. All proceeds from this dinner went towards the Antiochian Women Project, “Help Feed Hungry Children”. On Thursday, December 3, we held our traditional Ornament Exchange. We had dinner, exchanged Christmas ornaments, brought toiletries and other personal items for the Vera House (our local women’s shelter for abused women and children), and we also held a Chinese Auction with proceeds going to a local charity. On January 10, 2016, following Liturgy, the ladies made and sold Zalabee to the parish to celebrate Epiphany. The parish members, friends, and relatives enjoyed themselves at our annual Valentine Dinner Dance, which was held on Saturday evening, February 6, 2016, and from which a portion of the proceeds were donated to the Vera House. During the month of March, “Ladies Month”, the ladies ushered, read the epistle in Arabic and English, and also gave a sermonette each week.

This summer, from May till the end of June, the ladies prepared sweets, kibbeh, and grape leaves for our Middle Eastern Festival, which will be held July 7—10, 2016. The ladies will man the Sweets booth, the Zalabee booth, the Icon and Religious Items booth, and will also sell our cookbook Good Eating The Arabic Way, as well as aprons.

PHOTO: Fr. Elias Nasr with the wonderful Ladies at St. Elias Syracuse’s July 2016 Middle Easter Festival

We are a small group, but we all pitch in to help get things done. This year, we have worked together to organize several charitable projects. For as the Apostle Luke wrote in the Book of Acts: “In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive”’ (Acts 20:35). These projects include: Archdiocesan project; collecting food for the needy; preparation of Hygiene Kits for IOCC relief; raising money for area crisis pregnancy center; visiting the sick; prepared and served Mercy Meals for parishioners, and prepared meals for events sponsored by the church (Bishop’s visits, Hafli).

We have also been blessed with the strength to pursue fundraising events at the church, such as our Cabbage Roll dinner, Pastry raffles, Chicken Barbeque, Bake Sales, and Special luncheons during Antiochian Women Month. God willing, we will be able pursue these projects and many more in the future.
St. Elias – Ottawa, Ontario
We have had a truly busy year, and our organisation has grown along the way.

The new position of Health & Welfare was created and at each of our meetings, we held hugely successful 20 minute discussions on a topic of interest to all, such as “How to Spring Clean Your Medicine Cabinet”; “Which Vitamins and Supplements Should We Be Taking as Women Age?”, and “Heads-Up for Healthier Brains”. We also have a religious topic at each of our meetings, and try to keep presentations to a maximum of 45 minutes; real-time translation of English to Lebanese is offered during meetings.

We gave been given an opportunity to make a difference. We are continuing our Humanitarian work, helping our wider community and also supporting our own. There were many deaths in our Parish family this year, and this has only brought our Ladies closer. When one of our long time members passed, we paid tribute to her years of service and generosity at her funeral, with an Honour Guard procession. Long stemmed pink roses were given to dozens of AW, who carried them walking into the Cathedral along-side the casket. We send cards and flowers of condolence, as well as get well cards, and also take food to their home. We visit some of our older Ladies who are in long-term care facilities.

We continue to support a women’s shelter in Ottawa, and when the local men’s mission had a request for warm clothing before Christmas, our Ladies stepped forward with bags of new items for the Mission. The Antiochian Women also support other organizations in our parish: meal preparation in support of our Fellowship Organization when they were raising funds for their “Children of the Syrian War” event, for those displaced into Lebanon. We also oversee all food preparation and make Saj bread for our annual Lebanese festival. We also hosted the reception of all Orthodox parishes for the Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers service held at St. Elias.

We are extremely active in our parish, but it is not always the same Ladies working every event as different branches oversee different areas: one organises the annual Mother’s Day celebration (now in its twenty-first year); another donations to the regional Breast Cancer Foundation, and a second charity. This past year, due to the wild fires in Fort McMurray, we sent a $2,000.00 through the Red Cross for aid relief, in addition to another $2,000.00 donation for the Antiochian Women’s project. Another group of Ladies organized a bake sale in November and the $1,000.00 proceeds raised were earmarked for the AW project. Some of our other activities have been a Lenten Luncheon; Father’s Day brunch; a Christmas dinner-meeting, and visiting the Cancer Foundation’s Cancer Coaching Centre.

One event we are really excited about was our Meet & Greet held during Antiochian Women’s Month in March: we hosted a small coffee and Danish reception in our hall for new Ladies, offering them gift bags that held some literature on the AW, a prayer card, an icon, some chocolate, and other treats. Fifty were prepared in all, and set up in a cordoned off area in which only Ladies were allowed. This initiative was very well received, and we were able to add 30 new names to our email list!

Preparation hundreds of meat fatayer for the Annual St. Elias Ottawa Bake Sale.

St. Elias Ottawa women hard at work making the traditional Saj bread at the Annual Leb Fest
**St. George – Richmond Hill, Ontario**

We had a very challenging and fruitful year, concentrating on re-establishing our sisterhood between the ladies. We were blessed by having so many new women join us and be part of our events and meal preparations. The Ladies’ dedication, perseverance, and creativity, in addition to their usual events, motivated our parish to putting our hands together, and to go above and beyond. Our achievements this year include our 2015 Summer Festival which raised a net profit of $1,930.00; Thanksgiving luncheon ($2,621.00, including $600 in donations); Christmas bake sale ($1,213.00); Christmas Ball ($4,735.00, including $750 in donations); February luncheon ($1,205.00); Annunciation Salmon luncheon ($2,401.00); Pascha bake sale ($2,594.00 with $100 in donations). Our 2016 Summer Festival will be headed, planned, and coordinated with all of St. George’s committees, and God willing, it will generate a high profit for us with a minimum expense. A big thank you to all the ladies who assisted this past year with all preparations for our events! Through their hard work, we were able to present Fr. Iskander with a cheque for $20,000!

Our spiritual and social calendar was equally full with the Ladies holding four *Fruits of the Spirit* seminars, held during our Pascha baking sessions. Ladies Month (March) had us being in charge of ushering, and reading Epistles. We had a great turnout for our May dinner at Jack Astor’s, where we recognised the hard work, service, and dedication of Grace Imrebei and Lily Hamawi – they are a great blessing to our church.

We expanded our methods of communicating by establishing a Facebook page, also keeping everyone up to date via email, Sunday meetings, and casual gatherings.

The St. George Ladies, also known as the Myrrh-Bearers Women, are blessed by God’s grace in having the faith, strength, and energy to work together to serve our Church. We would like to thank all of the ladies who have worked with us these past two years, and all those who have contributed to the Church in all the previous years whether by their hard work or contributions. May God bless all the families of the Ladies of St. George – they are the backbone of our community.

*Ladies Closing Dinner – St. George, Richmond Hill, Ontario*
The following information reflects a quick summary and review of the Antiochian Women’s activities and projects from September 2015 until May 2016.

Many thanks and much appreciation to the co-chairs of the Annual “Favorite” Basket Auction, Sylvia Bailey and Colline Doyle, and their committee. Their hard work and dedication resulted in making the fundraiser a big success. While keeping the expenses to a bare minimum, the event took in $15,700 in revenue. Jackie and I would like to extend sincere compliments to their efforts of accomplishing the task at hand with true spirit and an unselfish heart. The teamwork and positive energy they inspired made volunteering your time a total “feel good” experience. We would also like to thank Steven Sargent and his kitchen crew for their tireless contribution to our very major fundraiser. As a result of the “Favorite” Basket Auction, the Antiochian Women made their contribution of $1000 to this year’s arch diocese, project, Help Feed the Hungry Children.

Lorraine Pealer and Gayle Fadel are continuing to organize and staff the serving of refreshments for wakes that are held at our church. This undertaking is very successful and provides comfort and support for the family who has lost a loved one. As has been the tradition for many years, the Antiochian Women bake and donate dessert items for Mercy Meals at St. George. The Antiochian Women also organize the weekly Holy Bread, holding “baking” demonstrations every Saturday under the direction of Lorraine Pealer.

In October, Denise Filosofos and Sylvia Bailey co-chaired an annual gathering promoting breast cancer awareness. This year a “Paint Night” event was held to celebrate breast cancer survivors and awareness. The event was also to honour the memory of Ruby Filosofos who fought a long and courageous battle with breast cancer.

The Antiochian Women sponsored a St. George Holiday Party this year. The party took place at the 755 Restaurant on Sunday, December 13th. It was well attended and extended a feeling of well-being and holiday spirit.

Our organization participated in the assembly of Emergency Kits to Church World Services to be distributed by the IOCC, (International Orthodox Christian Charities.). The Health Kits that we assembled will be sent to people in areas of crisis, devastation and emergency living conditions throughout the world.

Our final meeting of the year is our annual steak roast. It will be held at the home of Sylvia Bailey. Ladies will bring something to grill and a dish to pass. A wonderful finale to a year of working together and an opportunity to celebrate fellowship.
St. Mary – Mississauga, Ontario

On behalf of St. Mary's AW, I am delighted to announce that this year, with the blessings of Fr. Elias Ayoub as well as the huge support of our parishioners, the Antiochian Women were very active in planning and hosting many social, spiritual and fundraiser events: in February, the Ladies' Night attracted over a 100 women and was very successful; in March, two Syrian Project fundraiser dinners generated over $3000 in proceeds; in April and May: five Lenten Dinners during Madayeh and two Easter Bazaars; in June, a Father's picnic at a local public park; in July, we are assisting our Golf Tournament Committee with this fundraiser event; in September, we are hosting St. Mary's Church Annual Party; in November, we will have a fun Karaoke night at a local restaurant, and in December, with God's will, this year we truly hope to host our Christmas party and Bazaars in our own new church!

Christ the Saviour Mission – Waterloo, Ontario

While Christ the Saviour does not have a formal Chapter of the Antiochian Women, the women of the parish are very active in a number of ministries. These include preparing and serving a meal, once a month, for approximately 235 people at a local soup kitchen; providing administrative assistance to the priest; choir director and singers, readers and chanters; Sunday School coordinator and teachers; hospitality ministry; overseeing Sunday fellowship and parish celebrations, such as baby showers; Church building care (cleaning and maintenance; gardening; beautification for Feasts; women’s prayer and study group; and fundraising events: Twelve Days of Christmas Feast (each year after Christmas, the parish holds a fund raising formal dinner at which many different ethnic foods are served – a lovely representation of the diversity of cultures within our parish), and Food Trucks! During the summer, we hot food trucks every Monday. It is a marvelous way to reach out to the local neighbours and raise money at the same time. We have 2-4 food trucks each week and we put out picnic tables with colourful table cloths. We have sidewalk chalk, bubble blowing equipment and snow cones for the children. Approximately 70 people have attended in each of the weeks we have hosted the food trucks.
Parish Reports and Photos

SS Peter & Paul Teen SOYO Camping Trip

Parish Life Conference summer 2016 - Antiochian Women meeting

Enjoying sisterhood at the 2016 NAB summer meetings at the Antiochian Village
Parish Reports and Photos

Camp Transfiguration has been an important part of our Diocese’s ministry to its children, and the DOECU-NY Antiochian Women have been one of its supporters from the very beginning. Established in 2002, Camp T experienced continuing growth every year, welcoming approximately 180 campers and 40 staff members for 2 weeks in the month of August.

The very rich daily schedule of our camp allows children to have two Christian Education lessons, and attend two services every day. Campers also participate in a variety of activities, such as fishing, tubing, swimming, archery, arts & crafts, cooking, kayaking, and many other sports on property.

For more information and to learn about the Camp T family, please visit us on social media:
http://camptransfiguration.org
www.facebook.com/CampTransfiguration/
http://instagram.com/camptransfiguration

Karla Samman, Assistant Director
On behalf of Alex Younes, Director

Camp Transfiguration Session 2 Clergy, Staff, Volunteers, and Campers – August 2016
Parish Reports and Photos

The Antiochian Women of DOECUNY, cheerleaders and supporters of our youth

Since 2001, the Soccer Tournament has been striving to offer the 15 year-old and up of our Diocese with an opportunity to gather in the name of Christ and spend the Labor Holiday week-end playing their favorite sport. In addition to the games, players and supporters are invited to attend Vespers, Divine Liturgy and the Awards Brunch organized by the host parish.

Established in 2011, the Diocese’s Basketball Tournament primarily targets the 13-19 years-old. Held a few weeks after Pascha, it provides our Youth with the chance to commune through spiritual and social talks, Vespers, Divine Liturgy and a dance.

Rouba Khouri – Youth Advisor, DOECUNY Teen SOYO
Fr. Iskander has served as the Spiritual Advisor for nearly all of our Diocese’s organisations: Teen SOYO, then The Order of St. Ignatius, and then the Antiochian Women. He also is fondly remembered for having served the Fellowship of St. John the Divine for over a decade as the Bible Bowl Master of Ceremonies, most especially for his favourite Call to Order expression (“Helloooo! Wake up and smell the hummus!”), and for gently calming down parents who might have taken Bible Bowl a little too seriously.

Always one to lead by example, the edifying messages Fr. Iskander would share at Fall Delegates Meetings and Parish Life Conferences resonated with love, acceptance, kindness, conciliation, and inclusivity. A “father” in every sense of the word, it is no wonder that he is a spiritual father to so many and not just to his parishioners. He has always ensured that we were fed spiritually, measuring the weight of his words, so that everyone knew we are one family.

Fr. Iskander is married to Khouryee Deborah and has seven daughters, two of whom are tonsured nuns: Sister Elysia at Holy Dormition Monastery in Rives Junction, Michigan, USA, and Sister Tabitha at Monastère de la Vierge Marie la Consolatrice (Panagia Panagoritsa) in Lachute, Quebec, Canada. He is also blessed with six delightful grandchildren: one boy and five girls.

The Women of our Diocese are eternally grateful to Fr. Iskander for his leadership, guidance, support, and devotion as our Spiritual Advisor. May God grant him many years!

Our dearest Fr. Iskander and Kh. Deborah Younes
The Antiochian Women are excited to announce the theme of our 2017 Project:

“Strengthening the Ministries of our Church.”

This theme is a distillation of the sweeping vision which Metropolitan Joseph readily shared with us at the summer meetings in July, 2016. His Eminence spoke with farsighted boldness and passion about the many challenges and opportunities which lay before our God-protected Archdiocese. His vision is of a vigorous Church actively proclaiming our faith in Jesus Christ and lovingly ministering to the broken world around us. This is already a description of the ministries in many of our parishes, but to keep moving forward while broadening our active ministries, we must reinforce and strengthen our foundations.

(Note to all parishes: Please send the money you collect for the 2017 Project to your Antiochian Women diocesan treasurer by June 1, 2017.

Resources to support this project can be found at: http://antiochian.org/women-project-2016-2017
Do you know that we have an Antiochian Women's Book Club?

All across our Antiochian Archdiocese our Sisterhood is being encouraged to participate.

This year's book selection is "Hinds Feet on High Places" by Hannah Gurnard.

This book is a beautiful allegory dramatizing the yearning of God’s children to be led to new heights of love, joy and victory.

In this story, we follow Much-Afraid on her spiritual journey through difficult places with her two companions, sorrow and suffering. Learn how Much-Afraid overcomes her tormenting fears as she passes through many dangers and mounts at last to the High Places. There she gains a new name and returns to her valley of service, transformed by her union with the loving Shepherd.

We encourage you to join in reading this book and also to form a Book Club with the women in your parish. This book is appropriate for even your High School-aged young ladies.

Discussion questions will be sent out to enhance your Book Club experience.

Happy Reading!!

These verses from the Bible shed light on the title:

“The Lord God is my strength and He will make my feet like hind’s feet, and He will make me walk upon mine high places.” (The Lord is my strength; He will direct my feet to the end; He will set me upon high places, so to conquer by His song.” – Orthodox Study Bible) Habakkuk 3:19

“Who makes my feet like a deer and sets me on high places. Psalm 17:34

“He makes my feet like the feet of deer and sets me on my high places.” II Kingdoms 22:34

THINGS HEARD IN CHURCH… Out of the Mouths of Babes!

Three to four years old seems to be the magic age. ..One, overhearing an adult stating that they worry about everything, piped up and said, "You worry because you don't trust Jesus!"

Another one of the children, after being told to be quiet in church because it was time to pray to God, yelled out at full volume, "I hate God! And I don't like you either!" I am glad to say said child is quite faithful now.

One day we had a priest coming to bless our house and when he rang the doorbell, my three-year-old opened the door and exclaimed, "Jesus is here!" Then tackled the unsuspecting priest with a huge bear hug.

Another three-year-old standing next to me in church during a memorial service reached out and grabbed my hand and whispered in my ear, "Mommy, when you die I'll pray for you everyday."

From Amanda B., Diocese of Los Angeles & the West

Please share your “THINGS HEARD IN CHURCH…Out of the Mouths of Babes” for the next Diakonia
A NOTE TO DIOCESAN PUBLIC RELATIONS DIRECTORS:

All articles, news from parishes, photos, bios and messages are due the first of the month PRIOR to the month of publication. Please collect and email them to antiochianwomenna@gmail.com according to the schedule below:

The following items are needed to highlight your diocese:
1. Bios and photos from your Diocesan Bishop, Spiritual Advisor and Board Members.
2. Messages from your Diocesan Bishop, Spiritual Advisor and President.
3. Photos and news articles from the chapters. All articles must be about or of interest to the Antiochian Women.
4. Notices of diocesan gatherings, retreats, conferences, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diocese</th>
<th>Date of Publication</th>
<th>Date Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. NAB Board (His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH, and His Grace Bishop JOHN)</td>
<td>October 2015</td>
<td>Done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Diocese of New York and the Archdiocesan District (His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH &amp; His Grace Bishop NICHOLAS). Diocese of Charleston, Oakland, and the Mid-Atlantic (His Grace Bishop THOMAS)</td>
<td>January 2016</td>
<td>Done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Diocese of Los Angeles and the West and the Diocese of Eagle River and the Northwest (His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH)</td>
<td>April 2016</td>
<td>Done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Diocese of Miami and the Southeast (His Grace Bishop ANTOUN)</td>
<td>July 2016</td>
<td>Done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Diocese of Ottawa, Eastern Canada and Upstate NY (His Grace Bishop ALEXANDER)</td>
<td>October 2016</td>
<td>Done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. <strong>Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest (His Grace Bishop ANTHONY)</strong></td>
<td>January 2017</td>
<td><strong>Dec. 15, 2016</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Diocese of Wichita and Mid-America (His Grace Bishop BASIL)</td>
<td>April 2017</td>
<td>Mar 15, 2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

A NOTE TO ALL OUR READERS:

“His Eminence Metropolitan Joseph once said, When everyone left our Lord Jesus Christ alone on the cross, the women were there. Can you see how important the women are? You are the myrrhbearing women!”

Dear Sisters in Christ,

These words from Sayidna JOSEPH ring true as we read the many good works of the ladies of the Diocese of Ottawa, Eastern Canada and Upstate New York. Thank you to Your Grace, Bishop Alexander, Fr. Saikaly, each board member and parish who sent in messages, parish updates, and photos. Thank you Louise Salhany for compiling everything so completely and beautifully!

May Metropolitan JOSEPH’s words also bring each of us joy and strength as we enter into the Nativity Fast and look to the Birth of our Lord!

In Christ,

Melinda Bentz, Public Relations