



THE MOST REVEREND
 METROPOLITAN JOSEPH
 358 MOUNTAIN ROAD
 ENGLEWOOD, NEW JERSEY 07631

ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN

THE MOST REVEREND METROPOLITAN PHILIP -- FOUNDER

✧ A SISTERHOOD SERVING CHRIST THROUGH SERVING OTHERS ✧

✧ DIOCESE OF NEW YORK & WASHINGTON DC
 DIOCESE OF CHARLESTON, OAKLAND & THE MID-ATLANTIC ✧
 ◆ PRESIDENT ◆



February 5, 2019

Your Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH, Your Grace Bishop Thomas, Reverend Fathers and Sisters in Christ,

Christ is in our Midst! He is and ever shall be!

It is hard to believe I am almost done with my second year as the President of the Antiochian Women of the East; I still have so much to learn and do! I want to emphasize how much of a blessing it is to serve our two dioceses and to learn about them through my visits to the parishes. I moved recently to Virginia and this gave me the opportunity to be able to visit more churches in our region. For example, most recently I visited St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church; it was a unique and an amazing experience to learn about the Western Rite customs. I am planning to visit more churches in the near future.

During my visits I talked with the ladies about who we are, what we do, what is going on in our region, how we can feed our spiritual lives, and what are the expectations of our parishes in not only our own communities but within our dioceses. I noticed some of the churches I visited are eager to learn more about what other churches are doing and need to be educated about the North American Board. I enjoyed listening to opinions and feedback. I believe we have made big changes in some churches and am committed to continuing this outreach in an effort to get to know more ladies within our parishes.

I am very happy to announce our new Diocesan Newsletter, published for the first time, another way to get to know each other. I am so thrilled to let you know that 27 parishes from our dioceses displayed their full devotion to God and their communities in our first issue. The goal is to publish the newsletter twice a year, during the Advent and the Paschal seasons. Articles are welcomed on an endless variety of topics, from describing a special ministry team in your parish, visiting a monastery, submitting personal reflections, or sharing the activities of the women of your parish. Submissions for the spring 2019 newsletter may be sent to our Membership Coordinator, **Pam Hennawi**, before **April 15, 2019**. I am so proud to be part of the AWE. The officers, coordinators, and Spiritual Advisor, maintain regular communication via phone conferences once a month, which last for one hour and half to two hours. In addition, we communicate everything digitally through multiple emails and text messages. We ordered 100 scarves which display the AWE logo to see if our ladies would be interested in purchasing them. We have received an overwhelming response. As a result, we ordered 200 more and we order 500 special bags which have a cross to carry holy bread. All the monies raised will go towards a designated Humanitarian project.

Included below are additional updates:

- ✧ Vision 20/20: I have personally contacted all 45 parishes/missions in our dioceses during my first and second year in office, giving them expectations for the upcoming year as well. I have noticed an increase in participation of AWE chapters at the local and diocesan levels. I have been encouraged by the churches within one to two hours of driving distance coming together to participate in

Ms. Rula Osama Khoury ✧ PRESIDENT of the Antiochian Women of the East
 P.O. Box 711191, Herndon, VA 20171 - (cell) 724-799-1820 – aweorthodox1973@gmail.com

✧ ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN WOMEN OF NORTH AMERICA ✧

activities and fellowship together. For example, St. George Church in Washington, DC invited the Antiochian Women of SS Peter and Paul for a gathering last fall. In March of 2019, St. George Cathedral in Pittsburgh will invite all the churches around them for a tea party. In May, SS Peter and Paul Church in MD and the other churches around them are planning a visit to St. Nina Monastery.

- ❖ Secretary Report (Kh. Loukia Dixon): The AWE Bylaws were approved by Metropolitan JOSEPH; we are currently awaiting receipt of the hard copy revision by mail. We would like to thank Fadia Juzdan for helping us update the terminology to match that of the NAB Bylaws as well as making minor revisions. Some of the secretarial duties include: taking minutes for all monthly meetings, editing all outgoing reports, and corresponding with our hierarchs and the NAB Board.
- ❖ Treasurer Report (Kh. Rima Zafaran): We are happy to let you know this year we have only 6 churches that did not pay their dues, because of their mission statuses. While they are not required to pay dues, we will continue to make every effort to visit these mission parishes. We would like your annual dues for 2018-2019 to be **sent by May 1 st 2019**.
- ❖ Antiochian Women's Project Report (Anglia Saliby): We continue with many outreach programs in our communities and also generously support the Antiochian Women's Project each year. This past year, our dioceses raised \$24,174.00 USD for the Project 2018 "Vocations." We look forward to contributing to the 2019 Project "Building a Cathedral." Project donations are due no later than May 1, 2019. A donation check made payable to the Antiochian Women of the East and should be mailed directly to the AWE Treasurer, Khouria Rima Zafaran.
- ❖ Religious Coordinator Report (Maria Koropsak): During the year, it has been my pleasure to be able to pass on to all the AWE Presidents in our parishes, the beautiful liturgical readings that NAB Religious Coordinator, Kh. Dannie Moore, sends us. The readings are a wonderful way to remind us why the Church celebrates the various liturgical feasts and help us to participate in the joy of each feast we observe. I also wrote an article about the "Myrrh Bearing Women" in the *Word Magazine*. In addition, we are planning our Annual Lenten Retreat on the **weekend of March 29-31, 2019**. **Keynote Speaker, Fr. Charles Nicholas Baz**, will be talking about Liturgy "The Three Pillars of our Holy Orthodox Faith as outlined by our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ in His Sermon on the Mount: Praying, Fasting, & Almsgiving" (Matthew 6: 1-20).
- ❖ Public Relations Report (Colleen McAfee): We are so proud to announce our Winter Newsletter. We are continually updating our email and contact lists of the presidents of our ladies' groups.
- ❖ Memberships Coordinator Report (Pamela Hennawi): We sent Christmas Cards, each with a \$50 Gift Card, to seven widowed priest's wives in our dioceses and would like to thank Julia for putting together the contact list for us. We are encouraging the church presidents to give an Antiochian Women's pin to young women upon their 18th birthday.
- ❖ Humanitarian Coordinator Report (Leslie Carter Deeb): We are currently researching the possibility of participating in a FOCUS sponsored Back-to-School Backpack Program for the first time as the

AWE board. In addition, with the blessing of His Eminence, Metropolitan JOSEPH, we introduced to you a liturgical music project, a two-part liturgy in English, commissioned from the Antiochian Archdiocese's former Composer-in-Residence, Nazo Zakkak. This service will join our faith and music together to enhance our daily lives in worship. This music project will honor the beloved memory of Khouria Stefanie Yova Yazge, wife of our Antiochian Village Camp Director, Fr. Anthony, who devoted much of her life to the music of the Church, and was very fond of Nazo and the music he has been composing for Orthodox worship. We believe she will be rejoicing with us as we commence with this project. In order to produce this musical project in its entirety, we need to raise \$ 6,000.00 to begin the production, and to publish it in a digital format. It is our hope that all of our parishes & missions within our Eastern Dioceses will donate towards the costs of this production.

- ❖ Social Media Coordinator Report (Nancy Tentzeras): We currently have 168 likes and 175 Followers, on the AWE Facebook page, which continues to increase daily. We encourage our ladies to “like,” “share” the page, “invite” their friends and family to “like” the page, and to share any pictures or posts of their respective women’s groups’ activities. We invite you to visit the AWE Website at <http://ww1.antiochian.org/awe> for more detailed Information.
- ❖ We hope the following information enables the Antiochian Women in your parishes to make plans and set goals for the coming months. Please mark your calendars for the Eastern Dioceses 2019 **Parish Life Conference June 26-June 30, 2019**, which will be held at the Antiochian Village Heritage & Learning Center, Bolivar, PA and hosted by. Antiochian Village and St. John Chrysostom Church of York, PA. In addition to services and classes, you will have an opportunity to visit and venerate the resting place of St Raphael of Brooklyn.

On behalf of all the officers and coordinators, I would like to thank our Hierarchy and Spiritual Advisor, Fr. Donald Shadid, for the guidance given to us to carry on God’s work in our dioceses. I appreciate our officers and coordinators for their commitment to these positions and their ability to work so closely together, even with hundreds of miles that separate us throughout the year (answering my endless emails, text messages, and phone calls!).

Have a blessed great Lent.

Your sister in Christ,

Rula Osama Khoury
AWE President

Ms. Rula Osama Khoury ❖ PRESIDENT of the Antiochian Women of the East
P.O. Box 711191, Herndon, VA 20171 - (cell) 724-799-1820 – aweorthodox1973@gmail.com

❖ ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN WOMEN OF NORTH AMERICA ❖