

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

FIFTY-FOURTH CONVENTION OF THE ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN
ARCHDIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA

CONVENED AT THE AMWAY GRAND PLAZA HOTEL
GRAND RAPIDS, MI

Thursday, July 25, 2019 – 11:07 AM

I. Opening Prayer

His Eminence the Most Rev. Metropolitan JOSEPH, Primate, opened the General Assembly with prayer and the Troparion of Holy Pentecost.

II. Roll Call and Quorum

Upon the call of Metropolitan JOSEPH, Rev. Archdeacon Emile Sayegh, Chancellor, declared the existence of a quorum and the qualification to conduct the business of the Archdiocese. 565 of a possible 780 delegates were present in person or by proxy constituting 72% of the total possible votes.

III. Introduction of North American hierarchs

His Eminence noted the absence of His Grace Bishop Alexander due to illness. He introduced Their Graces Bishop Basil, Bishop Thomas, Bishop John, Bishop Anthony, and Bishop Nicholas. He asked for a standing ovation in recognition of their good work. His Eminence also thanked Almighty God for the good clergy of the Archdiocese.

IV. Appointment of Convention Officers

Metropolitan JOSEPH asked Archpriest Thomas Zain, Vicar General, to announce the appointment of the Sergeants-at-Arms of the convention: Mr. Philip Saliba, Mr. Elie Haig, Ms. Carol Laham, and Ms. Karen Kinan.

V. Introduction of the Members of the Archdiocese Board of Trustees

Fr. Zain acknowledged the officers of the Antiochian Archdiocese: Mr. Fawaz El-Khoury, Vice Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Ms. Mary Winstanley-O'Connor, Esq., Secretary of the Board of Trustees, Mr. Salim Abboud, Treasurer and CFO of the Archdiocese, V. Rev. Fr. Michael Ellias, Secretary of the Archdiocese, V. Rev. Fr. Timothy Ferguson, Protosyngellos, Rev. Fr. Nicholas Belcher, Episcopal Assistant, and Rev. Archdeacon Emile Sayegh, Esq., Chancellor.

Fr. Zain invited the members of the Archdiocese Board of Trustees who were present to introduce themselves: Mr. Daniel J. Abraham, Mr. Edward E. Assile, Mr. Richard Ayoub, Esq., Dr. David G. Bojrab, Mr. Dan Braun, Mr. Roger David, Mr. George G. Darany (Honorary), Ms. Darlene Haddad, Dr. Elias K. Hebeka, Mr. Elie J. Haig, Mr. Khalil E. Kardous, Ms. Karen Kinan, Ms. Carol Laham, Esq., Mr. Gregory H. Laham, Jr., Mr. William

D. Morrison, Ms. Dianne O'Regan, Ms. Rebecca Pagani, Mr. Mansour O. Rayan, Mr. Philip N. Saliba, Mr. Elias Shaheen, Mr. Douglas J. Skaff, Mr. Rami Younes, and Mr. Dimitri C. Zeidan.

Absent members were: Mr. Michael Homsey, Esq., Dr. George Madanat, Dr. Nicholas J. Massad, Ms. Kelli Kouri Neagle, Mr. Majed J. Nesheiwat, Mr. Alan Rossi, and Dr. George Thomas.

VI. Minutes of the 53rd Archdiocese Convention, Hollywood, FL, July 2017

Dr. Elias Hebeka moved to accept the Minutes of the 53rd Archdiocese Convention held in Hollywood, FL, in July 2017. Fr. Joseph Purpura seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

Metropolitan JOSEPH noted in the minutes that Fr. Michael Laffoon had requested a full report on all endowment funds and how they are invested. Dr. Hebeka said it would be explained in his report

Metropolitan JOSEPH also asked about the goal of increasing the maximum stipend from the Retired Clergy Housing Allowance Fund for retired clergy and widowed clergy wives. Fr. Ellias responded that the main emphasis is now on increasing retirement savings through the new 401(k) plan.

His Eminence recalled that His Grace Bishop Antoun of thrice-blessed memory made a final and moving public appearance at the Archdiocese Convention in Miami, FL. He also celebrated the memory of His Eminence Metropolitan PHILIP of thrice-blessed memory.

VII. Report of the Department of Finance

A. Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2019

Mr. Salim Abboud, CFO and Treasurer, presented the Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2019, which had previously been distributed to all the parishes and is appended hereto. He offered an overview of the archdiocesan finances for the last five years.

Mr. Abboud acknowledged his co-workers at the Archdiocese Headquarters: Mr. Sameh Khouzam, Comptroller, Ms. Teresa Ruggiero, Ms. Jennifer Huarcaya, Rev. Fr. Paul Matar, and Ms. Marlene Ayoub.

Mr. Abboud introduced the members of the various committees and summarized each committee's purpose and responsibilities. He emphasized that the Department of Finance is making an effort to include as many people and diverse perspectives as possible in order to manage archdiocesan resources responsibly. He noted, however, that the Department still needs a communications committee in order to explain the operations of the Archdiocese with transparency. Mr. Abboud announced that his slide presentation would appear in the Word Magazine, and that Deacon Christian will post it on the archdiocesan website.

Fr. Ghattas Hajal moved to accept the report. Fr. Christopher Salamy seconded the motion.

Questions from the floor:

Fr. Michael Tassos noted Mr. Abboud's not having reported on an external audit. He thanked Mr. Abboud for the innumerable hours of volunteer labor he has given. He also explained that the Department has engaged an external auditor for a review of archdiocesan finances and procedures.

Kh. Claudia Zain expressed admiration for Mr. Abboud's presentation and his dedicated work.

Fr. Anthony Bahou asked about the line item for Continuing Pastoral Education. Fr. Thomas Zain clarified that the amount was the stipend for the former director of the St. Stephen's Course of Studies program, but those payments have discontinued under the new structure.

Mr. Richard Power of Myrtle Beach, SC, rose to say that he had sent a letter to Mr. Abboud outlining his concern for an external audit and other issues. Mr. Abboud responded that Mr. Power had already received a response to his questions via email which he had sent earlier in the day.

Mr. Kardous thanked Mr. Abboud for an excellent and detailed report. He asked the Assembly to consider if parishes would be willing to pay for an external audit which could be quite expensive. He noted that the Department is building a system so that an external audit would be possible and cost effective.

The motion passed and the report was approved unanimously.

B. Proposed Budget for Fiscal Years 2020 and 2021

At the recommendation of an external auditor the Department has begun working on a consolidated report for all the institutions of the Archdiocese in order to decide whether it is feasible and appropriate to apply Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) policy to archdiocesan finances. The Board of Trustees has established a committee to determine if it is appropriate to use GAAP principles. The adoption of those principles could have implications for the audit of all parishes or a sampling of parishes.

Mr. Abboud, CFO and Treasurer, presented the Proposed Budget for Fiscal Years 2020 and 2021. He explained that the 2020 budget is conservative and flat in order to examine the departmental expenses more closely. His presentation is appended hereto.

Fr. Maximos Saikali moved to approve the Proposed Budget for Fiscal Years 2020 and 2021. Mr. Gregory Abdalah seconded the motion.

Discussion on the Motion:

Fr. Fouad Saba observed the absence of an amount of receipts from the Miami Convention on page 1, line C 5 Receipts for Archdiocese Convention from Host Parish.

The motion passed as amended by Fr. Saba's observation.

For the sake of transparency Mr. Abboud also provided an overview of the archdiocesan Balance Sheet via slide presentation.

Dr. Elias Hebeka presented the report of the Investment Committee via slide presentation. He reported that the committee has consolidated many accounts and has established an investment policy statement of purpose and goal for each account and endowment as well as an investment strategy. He addressed the question of Fr. Laffoon raised at the Miami Convention. He reported on all fund performances. Total assets have grown by more than \$6 million while the expense ratio for advisory fees has significantly declined.

Fr. Elia Shalhoub moved to accept the report, and Fr. Joseph Rahal seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The General Assembly adjourned at 12:58 PM for lunch.

The General Assembly reconvened at 2:15 PM.

After the recess Mr. Abboud continued his review of the policy and practice of the Department.

Technology and Policy Committee – Mr. Abboud recognized the work of Rev. Deacon Christian Manasseh, Chair, and states that there needs to be enhanced development of all archdiocesan communication venues.

Legacy Project – Ms. Mary Winstanley-O'Connor, Chair, is investigating an insurance program to insure potential donors so that the Antiochian Archdiocese would receive the death benefit in order to facilitate long-term stability.

Real Estate and Insurance Committee – Mr. Edward Assile, Chair, has been requesting copies of the insurance policies of all parishes and institutions of the Archdioceses in order to assure that sufficient coverage is in force; however, some churches have not yet responded.

Mr. Elkhoury noted that not all church assets are in the name of the church. The committee has discovered that some accounts are under name of the pastor or another individual.

Food for Hungry People – Mr. Abboud confirmed that all funds are being disbursed from this program to legitimate causes. Ms. Anne Thomas and Fr. Ted Pulcini are developing a new initiative to make grants to parishes for local distribution. For accountability purposes the administrators will ask for pictures from events, financial statements, and other documentation for review and in order to encourage additional or enhanced efforts.

VIII. Reports from Archdiocesan Departments and Organizations

The Archdiocese office had previously submitted electronic copies of departmental and organizational reports to the parishes for review and comment. Those reports are available for viewing on the archdiocesan website.

Outgoing President of NAC Teen SOYO Elizabeth Lengyel-Leahu presented the organization's report.

1985 NAC Teen SOYO President Fr. Michael Nasser moved to accept the report. Mr. Mike Simon seconded the motion. The Assembly received the report.

Fr. Joseph Purpura, Chair, presented the report for the Department of Youth. He noted that this year NAC Teen SOYO is celebrating its 50th anniversary and shares that date with man's to moon landing and re-launch. New efforts include a grant for \$100,000 for a parish mentoring program with a potential for three additional years.

Fr. Purpura reported that 61 orators participated in the Oratorical Festivals this year, and 57 participated last year. This year 123 teams participated in the Bible Bowl. He announced that Gospel of John will be the topic for the Bible Bowl next year, and John 3:17 will be the topic for the Oratorical Festival.

Fr. Purpura concluded his report by announcing that to date \$277,500 have been awarded in scholarships from the Francis Maria Scholarship Fund, and the fund now holds more than \$400,000.

Fr. Antoun Araj moved to accept the report. 1990 NAC Teen SOYO President Ms. Julie Abboud seconded the motion. The Assembly received the report.

Mr. Wayne Parr, Chair, presented the report for Young Adult Ministry (YAM). Mr. Parr explained that YAM is largely a ministry for young adults under the age of 35. YAM hosts a conference for young professionals on the opposite year of convention. There were 210 participants at the conference in Denver, CO, and he announced that the 2020 conference will be in Austin, TX.

Mrs. Barbara Hebeka moved to accept the report. Ms. Angela Saliby seconds the motion.

Fr. Timothy Baclig noted that YAM's predecessors had worked as a Pan-Orthodox movement to unite young people across jurisdictions.

Mr. Kal Kardoos asked how many YAM participants are attending this convention. Mr. Parr responded that at least 81 were participating on a group text, and Convention Co-Chairman Alan Abraham reported that there were at least 135 YAM registrants.

Ms. Marsha Nimr asked what happens to next age group beyond YAM, including the young married population. Mr. Elkhoury responded that Fr. Thomas Zain FTZ and others are in the process of generating programs for that demographic.

Fr. Milad Selim thanked His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH for the opportunity to work with the young adults, and he stressed that YAM was a movement of young adults striving to address the church's position on current issues across jurisdictions.

Fr. Michael Nasser noted that Tuesday's clergy meeting had the longest and most in depth discussion about the engagement of young people.

Fr. Fouad Saba strongly recommended that YAM be structured with a constitution and officers to cultivate future leaders in the archdiocese. Mr. Parr responded that the young adults did not necessarily want officers, but it is an on-going discussion.

Metropolitan JOSEPH stressed the importance of this subject. He encouraged the faithful to be patient and to give the youth the freedom to explore and find themselves. He stated that our love and support are important and that YAM is only one tool we are using to attract the youth back to the church and to themselves.

The Assembly received the report.

Dianne O'Regan, President, presented the report of the North American Board of the Antiochian Women.

Ms. O'Regan introduced the incoming officers of the Antiochian Women: Kh. Suzanne Murphy (President), Ms. Sheryl Vanderwagen (Vice President), Ms. Dorothy Tampary (Recording Secretary), Ms. Laila Ferris (Treasurer), and Kh. Kellilynn Barberg (PR Director).

Kh. Suzanne Murphy moved to accept the report, and Ms. Nancy Tanzaris seconded the motion.

The Assembly received the report.

Mr. Roger David, National Chairman, presented the report of the Order of St. Ignatius of Antioch.

Mr. Dan Abraham moved to accept the report, and Fr. Ghatas Hajal seconded the motion.

Ms. Mary Winstanley-O'Connor thanked Mr. David on behalf of the more than 2200 members of the Order and the Governing Council.

Fr. Joseph Rahal noted the Order's on-going support of clergy and camp scholarships.

NAC Teens and officers thanked the Order for everything the Order has done.

The Assembly received the report.

Ms. Karen Kinan introduced a program called HOST (Helping Orthodox Students Thrive) with the purpose of making sure that when students leave home for college, there will be people and a place to receive them.

Fr. Christopher Salamy moved to accept the report. Fr. Joseph Purpura seconded the motion.

Deacon Andrew Andrews suggested that HOST could dovetail with a local parish connection and OCF Chapters.

The Assembly received the report.

Questions and Comments regarding reports of departments and organizations.

Fr. Nektarios Najjar asked the Department of Christian Education for an update on new curriculum. Ms. Carol Buleza, Chair, reported that an announcement will appear online describing the production of new materials. Ms. Buleza is seeking approval of a proposal for a new offering which would move from an informational curriculum to a spiritual and formational curriculum. There would be lessons introducing students to Teen SOYO, YES, camp counselors, and YAM in order to bridge the students into next steps. She wants to publish two grade levels at a time.

Deacon Andrews noticed five reports in which Departments wanted to move forward but did not have sufficient funds. He asked if there was insufficient funding or if the Departments did not know how to make a justifiable request. Several departments outlined potential projects, and Mr. Salim Abboud assured the Assembly that there would be a continuing review of departmental functions and requirements and that all priorities would be taken into consideration.

The Assembly adjourned at 4:05 PM following a prayer by His Grace Bishop Basil.

Friday, July 26, 2019, 11:00 AM

Metropolitan JOSEPH opened the session with prayer at 11:10 AM and a reading from I Corinthians 4:9-13.

IX. Address of Metropolitan JOSEPH to the 54th Archdiocese Convention

The address of the Metropolitan will appear in the November 2019 issue of the Word Magazine.

X. Presentation of Proposed Resolutions – Rev. Archdeacon Emile Sayegh, Chancellor and Chairman of the Department of Legal Affairs

RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION

TO THE HOST PARISH

WHEREAS, St. Nicholas Antiochian Orthodox Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan, has graciously hosted the 54th Biennial Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocesan Convention at the historic Amway Grand Plaza Hotel, Grand Rapids, Michigan, from July 21-28, 2019;

AND WHEREAS, the Pastor, Very Rev. Fr. Michael Nasser and the Convention Co-Chairpersons, Allen Abraham and Kathy Abraham, together with their the entire Convention Committee, the Parish Council and all the faithful have worked tirelessly and spared no efforts to assure the success of this Convention, and providing wonderful hospitality for our every need, family fellowship and spiritual growth;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that this 54th Archdiocesan Convention, duly assembled at Grand Rapids, Michigan, from July 21-28, 2019, in unanimity and by acclamation extends to the Host Pastor and the entire Convention Committee, its heartfelt thanks and appreciation for an outstanding and extraordinary convention.

RESOLUTION PLEDGING OUR SUPPORT AND LOVE

TO OUR MOTHER CHURCH OF ANTIOCH AND TO PATRIARCH JOHN X

WHEREAS, the hierarchs, clergy, Board of Trustees and faithful, under the leadership of our beloved Metropolitan JOSEPH, Primate of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America, having met in General Assembly at the 54th Biennial Convention of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America on this 26th day of July, 2019, in Grand Rapids, Michigan; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly conveys its heart-filled greetings and love to our Father in Christ, Patriarch JOHN X, and to the entire See of the Great Church of Antioch; and

WHEREAS, as the conflict in Syria has begun to wind down and the country regains its territorial integrity, we reaffirm our commitment and support to assist the Patriarchate in the long, hard and difficult task of the rebuilding of Syria; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly further commits its loyalty and support to His Beatitude, Patriarch JOHN X in his on-going efforts to resolve the canonical issue that continues between the Patriarchate of Antioch and that of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem concerning Qatar; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly offers its additional support and prayers to His Beatitude, Patriarch JOHN X for his leadership skills and continuing efforts as the catalyst of peace in the resolution of the dispute between the Patriarchate of Constantinople and that of the Patriarchate of Moscow regarding Ukraine, where the effects of this schism are being felt on these shores and in all the Orthodox world;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, this 54th Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America Convention, duly assembled at Grand Rapids, Michigan, from July 22-29, 2019, in unanimity and by acclamation, commits its love, loyalty, support and prayers to our Mother Church of the Great See of Antioch and to our Father in Christ, Patriarch JOHN X, praying that Almighty God continue to guide His Beatitude as he continues his efforts to bring peace and conciliation between the Patriarchates of Antioch and Jerusalem and between the Patriarchates of Constantinople and Moscow. We extend our support and prayers for the rebuilding of Syria and to its people. We offer our humble prayers for the good health of Patriarch JOHN X. Many years Master!

**RESOLUTION HONORING
HIS EMINENCE ARCHBISHOP DEMETRIOS
AND WELCOMING HIS EMINENCE
ARCHBISHOP ELPIDOPHOROS
OF THE GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA**

WHEREAS, the hierarchs, clergy and faithful of this God-protected Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of North America have met as the General Assembly at the 54th Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocesan Convention here in Grand Rapids, Michigan;

AND WHEREAS, since his election as Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America on August 19, 1999, His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios has served the Archdiocese, as its Primate, with faith, zeal and devotion to our Lord Jesus Christ and His Holy Orthodox Church;

AND WHEREAS, His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios has been an exemplary model in working vigorously to preserve unity among all Orthodox throughout the United States;

AND WHEREAS, His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios has also served the Church in promoting learning and the Christian formation of clergy and laity as a respected scholar, author and professor;

AND WHEREAS, His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios ended his tenure as Archbishop of America with his letter of resignation to His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew;

AND WHEREAS, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros was elected as the new Primate of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America on May 11, 2019 and enthroned on June 22, 2019;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that this 54th Archdiocese Convention, duly assembled at Grand Rapids, Michigan, from July 21-28, 2019, in unanimity and by acclamation, expresses its deep appreciation and love to His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios for his twenty years of dedicated service in the vineyard of our Lord, as Primate of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this 54th Archdiocese Convention, duly assembled at Grand Rapids, Michigan, from July 21-28, 2019, in unanimity and by acclamation, offers its love and prayers for the success of His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros as he begins his *diakonia* for us to advance together as the Body of Christ and body of believers, as a united Church.

RESOLUTION

CALLING FOR A SYNAXIS OF ALL ORTHODOX AUTOCEPHALOUS CHURCHES BY THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH

WHEREAS, the hierarchs, clergy and faithful of this God-protected Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of North America have met as the General Assembly at the 54th Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocesan Convention here in Grand Rapids, Michigan;

AND WHEREAS, in the recent past, we have all witnessed the sorrowful and tragic situation in Ukraine concerning the unilateral actions of the Ecumenical Patriarch, which have and continue to promote permanent division among all members of the Orthodox Church. These actions represent a failure to constitute a single Orthodox Church in accordance with Her ecclesiological and canonical principles and brings harm to Her apostolic witness;

AND WHEREAS, as a result of these actions, the Orthodox Church of Russia broke off communion with the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, and we now experience the negative effects here in the United States and Canada as the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia and the Moscow Patriarchate in North America no longer share communion with Churches under the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Examples of the unity which have been disrupted, include pan-Orthodox services and participation in local Orthodox Clergy brotherhoods, etc., thereby hindering our common witness to the faithful and to the local communities in which we exist.

AND WHEREAS, as a further result of this division and disharmony, schismatic clergymen from uncanonical bodies in Ukraine could begin to serve in canonical jurisdictions, thereby

creating further disharmony and chaos here and in other parts of the world where we would otherwise have fraternal participation in unity;

AND WHEREAS, the appearance of disunity also occurs when the Orthodox Church is reduced to one dimension of a “nationalistic distinction” (such as ethnic background, language or affiliation), which in turn becomes the basis for the “ecclesiastical” organization, thus resulting in a number of bishops claiming pastoral responsibility for the same geographic region, as if they represented separate Churches rather than the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church;

AND WHEREAS, on the basis of its historic primacy, the long-standing role of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, as a center in service of Orthodox unity, is to lead and coordinate by bringing together, not to act in a unilateral manner. This primacy of honor is exercised within the context of collegiality, conciliarity and non-interference in the internal affairs of the Local Churches;

AND WHEREAS, any approach for granting autocephaly must be in accordance with Orthodox ecclesiology and consequently must respect the necessity of obtaining the prior agreement of all Orthodox Autocephalous Churches;

AND WHEREAS, there is a necessity to resort to the principle of unanimity and conciliation, concerning both our common Orthodox work and our unified positions on controversial issues. This unanimity and conciliation are true safeguards for Orthodox unity;

AND WHEREAS there is a necessity for spiritual vigilance regarding the stumbling block and snare of political entanglement, which history has shown only serves to weaken the Orthodox Church and Her united witness;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of this 54th Archdiocesan Convention, duly assembled at Grand Rapids, Michigan, from July 21-28, 2019, calls upon His All-Holiness, the Ecumenical Patriarch, to convoke a Synaxis of the Primate of the Orthodox Autocephalous Churches in order to discuss the current situation in Ukraine, to settle the issue of granting autocephaly to new Churches, to resolve wider ecclesiological issues regarding primacy, and in general to address our common problems through fraternal support, unity and participation.

RESOLUTION HONORING

ST. JUDE CHILDREN’S RESEARCH HOSPITAL

AND AMERICAN LEBANESE SYRIAN ASSOCIATED CHARITIES

WHEREAS, the hierarchs, clergy and faithful of this God-protected Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of North America have met as the General Assembly at the 54th Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocesan Convention here in Grand Rapids, Michigan;

AND WHEREAS, more than 80 years ago, prominent entertainer, Danny Thomas, the son of Lebanese immigrants to the United States, having early endured personal difficulties sought refuge in prayer and made a vow to St. Jude (Thaddeus), the patron saint of lost causes, was heard saying “Show me my way in life and I will build you a shrine”;

AND WHEREAS, after successfully finding his way in life and in order to fulfill his promise and bring his vow to a reality, in 1957, Danny Thomas, founded the American Lebanese Syrian Associated Charities (ALSAC), whose sole mission was to help build, raise funds and awareness necessary for the operation and maintenance of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital; and

AND WHEREAS, Thomas's vision became a reality when St. Jude Children's Research Hospital opened its doors on February 4, 1962 becoming today one of the world's premier pediatric research institutions that treats children from all walks of life, regardless of race, color, creed or family's ability to pay.

AND WHEREAS, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital leads the way the world understands, treats and defeats childhood cancer and other life-threatening diseases whose sole mission is to save children, find and advance cures of pediatric cancers;

AND WHEREAS, through the direct efforts of ALSAC, and its tireless efforts and persistent fund raising and awareness programs, the financial framework to keep St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in existence has been assured for many, many years to come;

AND WHEREAS, the current yearly budget of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, this year alone, exceeds one billion dollars and growing and still no patient or their family pay for the life-saving medical treatment and services;

AND WHEREAS, for almost 60 years, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital has been a beacon of hope for the countless innocent children that suffer from a myriad of diseases and have been at the forefront of innovative and ground-breaking medical advances in the treatment of childhood cancers and other life-threatening diseases;

AND WHEREAS, for almost 60 years and for many years to come, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, with its world-acclaimed faculty and staff, will continue to advance the cause of finding cures and treatment options for children around the world, as a testament of the faith and resilience of ALSAC, its founders, benefactors, supporters and staff;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that this 54th Archdiocesan Convention, duly assembled at Grand Rapids, Michigan, from July 21-28, 2019, in unanimity and by acclamation, conveys its deep gratitude, love, appreciation, and respect to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, to the American Lebanese Syrian Associated Charities (ALSAC), to the faculty, its many supporters, benefactors, and entire staff. We commend you and salute you for the wonderful dedication and work you continue to do in this most worthy cause. We pray that Almighty God bless each and every one of you and that His loving hand continue to guide you in all your work.

The General Assembly approved all five resolutions by acclamation.

XI. Old Business

XII. New Business

A. Report on the 2021 Archdiocese Convention – St. George Cathedral, Pittsburgh, PA

Mr. Raed Sweiss and Ms. Carole Jazzar, Co-Chairs, Department of Convention Planning introduced Fr. Joshua Mackoul, pastor of St. George Cathedral, Ms. Kweilin Nassar, and Dr. Stephen Esper. The committee announced a room rate of \$149/night at the Wyndham Grand Hotel in Pittsburgh's Golden Triangle. A video presentation highlighted many Pittsburgh attractions.

Bishop Thomas moved to accept the report. Fr. John Salem seconded the motion. The Assembly received the report.

B. Report on Bids for the 2023 Archdiocese Convention – St. George Church, Phoenix, AZ

Mr. Sweiss and Ms. Jazzar introduced Fr. Christopher Salamy and Subdeacon Gregory Abdalah to represent St. George Church of Phoenix. They made a video presentation and announced a room rate of \$185/night at the JW Marriott Desert Ridge Hotel.

Fr. Estephan of St. Mary's Church in Pawtucket, RI, had expressed interest in bidding for this convention, but the committee viewed the bid as premature due to a lack of hotel space in the city. They encouraged a future bid.

The Assembly accepted the bid of St. George Church of Phoenix.

C. Report on Bids for the 2025 Archdiocese Convention – St. George Church, Cicero, IL

Ms. Sweiss and Ms. Jazzar announced that for the first time the Archdiocese was entertaining bids for a convention six years in advance. They introduced Fr. Fouad Saba and Ms. Darlene Haddad to make the presentation for St. George Church of Cicero, IL. They announced a room rate of \$189/night plus \$10/night for parking at the Hyatt O'Hare Airport Hotel.

Fr. Joseph Purpura moved to accept the bid. Kh. Hajal seconded the motion. The Assembly accepted the bid.

D. Fr. Thomas Zain, Vicar General, announced that the Board of Trustees and the Governing Council of the Order of St. Ignatius of Antioch would meet in Brooklyn, October 18-20, 2019. Events that weekend would mark the 125th anniversary of St. Nicholas and the 100th anniversary of its State Street location.

E. Report of the Nominating Committee for the Board of Trustees – Archpriest Thomas Zain, Chair, presented the slate of candidates for the Archdiocese Board of Trustees.

Prior to elections Metropolitan JOSEPH appointed Mr. Gregory Laham as an honorary lifetime member of the Board of Trustees in recognition of his long-time sacrificial service to the Archdiocese. He then appointed Mr. Rami Younes to fulfill the remaining two years of Mr. Laham's full term.

Metropolitan JOSEPH appointed Mr. Fawaz Elkhoury, Mr. Mansour Rayan, Ms. Mary Winstanley-O'Connor, Ms. Kelly Khoury Nagle, and Mr. James Moses to full terms on the Board of Trustees.

Fr. Joseph Purpura moved that the Secretary cast one unanimous ballot for the submitted list of nominees. Dr. Elias Hebeka seconded the motion. The motion passed, and the Assembly elected the following nominees to the Archdiocese Board of Trustees:

Mr. Daniel Abraham
Mr. Edward Assile
Mr. Richard Ayoub
Mr. Dan Braun
Mr. Elie J. Haig
Ms. Darlene Haddad
Ms. Carol Laham
Mr. Douglas Skaff
Dr. George Thomas
Mr. Dimitri Zeidan

XIII. Adjournment and Closing Prayer

Fr. Ghattas Hajal moved to adjourn the Assembly. Fr. Demetri Darwish seconded the motion. The motion passed, and His Grace Bishop Anthony closed the General Assembly with prayer at 1:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

V. Rev. Fr. Michael Ellias, Secretary
Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America