

The Western Rite Vicariate

The Self-Ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America



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According to the founding document signed by Metropolitan Antony Bashir in 1962, and as reiterated in 1980 by Metropolitan Philip, the purpose of the Western Rite is twofold:

1. To provide a home in the Orthodox Church for western people of non-Byzantine cultural and religious background.
2. To witness to the catholicity of the Orthodox Church to her Byzantine Rite people, priests and theologians.

In addition, the document states that the Vicariate exists also

3. To establish a desirable uniformity of practice within the Western Rite parishes of the Archdiocese, and
4. To orient those who may, from time to time, apply for admission to it.

In order to provide such a home in the Orthodox Church, with the permission of the Metropolitan; we establish parishes and missions, we train clergy, we recommend to the Metropolitan to appoint clergy to the various parishes and missions, we publish or provide liturgical, musical, and educational materials, and we meet with interested people wishing to enter the Archdiocese through the Vicariate, answering questions about Orthodoxy and about the Western Rite within our Archdiocese, as well as helping to guide them through the process of entering the Archdiocese, especially if they are bringing a mission group with them. We also conduct classes in Western Rite liturgics and chant through the Antiochian House of Studies. We organize a bi-ennial Western Rite convention for both clergy and laity on the years opposite the Archdiocese convention, and we meet together during the departmental meetings of the Archdiocese convention.

In 2018

We held our bi-ennial Western Rite Conference in August. It was hosted by St. Peter's parish in Fort Worth, TX. 15 Western Rite parishes were represented with 127 total registrants. 34 Antiochian clergy attended; 4 non-Antiochian clergy, and 6 non-Orthodox clergy attended as well. It was one of the highest attendances ever. A highlight of the conference was the presence of our Beloved Metropolitan Joseph as well as our own beloved Bishop John. Deacon Finnian (Adam) Roberts was present and

showed us his very latest movie with a Western Rite focus. The Metropolitan ordained Holy Cross graduate Peter Cox to the Diaconate during one of the convention Masses. The choir, the music, and the gorgeous parish setting made all of the Masses extremely beautiful and moving.

During the year:

We published the *Ordo* which provides liturgical directions for daily services throughout the year.

We published *Credo* which is a bi-monthly informational and educational magazine for our clergy and laity, around 30 pages on letter size paper.

We published *Ad Clerum* which is an e-mail newsletter intended to provide up-dates and new information specifically for pastors of the Vicariate. It is sent out irregularly as needed. Through this medium, we provide 'translations' of Archdiocese liturgical directives for our pastors and parishes, making them relevant to our own Western Rite situation.

We published an annual 12 month wall calendar with daily liturgical and devotional information.

Stephen Kerr was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Bishop John on Dec. 11, 2016 and assigned to St. John the Baptist Mission in Lewiston, MD.

We have several parish which will be needing or currently already need pastors. Bishop John and I are working different ways to provide pastoral care for these communities. These include requesting ordination of current deacons within the vicariate, requesting assignment of byzantine rite priests who have expressed interest in learning the Western Rite and pastoring Western Rite congregations, and requesting admission to the Archdiocese and ordination of former non-Orthodox clergymen.

A few years before Fr. Paul Schneirla retired from the Vicariate, he appointed a committee to study the possibility of preparing our own Altar Missal for use in our parishes. Five years ago, as a result of ongoing study, Bishop John appointed Fr. John Fenton as project coordinator to finish the Missal. The first instalment to be published was the Masses for Holy Week and Easter which were finished just in time for this year's celebrations. Ian Abodeely has been a Godsend to us, working so hard with Fr. John to organize and typeset all of this material.

Fr. John has been working with Fr. Nicholas Alford to prepare a comprehensive *Ritual* which will contain all of the occasional sacraments and blessings used in parish life. They are drawing on a variety of sources to make sure that the book will be as complete, as user-friendly, and as traditional as possible. Complete rubrics and music for each Sacrament and blessing are being included as well.

Bishop John has been visiting Western Rite parishes all over the country, from California to Virginia and from Texas to Colorado. The following men have recently been ordained by Bishop John: Fr Demetrios (J. P.) Andrews to the priesthood; assigned to St Columba in Lafayette CO

Fr Michael Henningham to the priesthood; assigned to St Stephan in Springfield MA
Dn Beau Bruce to the diaconate; assigned to Church of the Advent in Atlanta GA
Dn Moses Anthony to the diaconate; assigned to St Benedict of Nursia in Wichita Falls TX

On Saturday, March 9, at the invitation of Metropolitan Tikhon, and with the blessing of Bishop John, Fr Edward Hughes celebrated a Mass according to the Liturgy of St Gregory on the campus of St Vladimir Seminary. It was part of an "Orthodox Inter-Seminary Movement" weekend which attracted students from St. Tikhon's Seminary and Holy Cross Seminary as well.

We have been investigating, examining, and evaluating mission possibilities in Virginia, Kentucky, and Washington State. A couple of parishes from other jurisdictions may also be interested in applying to be received into the Antiochian Western Rite.

Fr. Michael Henningham has begun a college campus outreach which he is coordinating with the inter-Orthodox campus fellowship program. It will also function as a prospective mission for that area.

For 2019-21

The *Ordo* will be prepared and published for each year.

Fr. John Fenton is planning on continuing to prepare this each year.

Credo will be prepared and published bi-monthly for each year.

The annual liturgical wall calendar will be prepared and published each year

Fr. Bernard Kinnick is planning on continuing to prepare these each year, even though he has retired from active ministry as pastor of St. Nicholas parish.

Ad Clerum will continue to be sent out as needed.

Fr. John Fenton and I plan on continuing to prepare this as required.

We will continue to provide pastors and clergy to communities as needed.

Bishop John and I will continue to work with the St. Stephen's Course of Studies and our Metropolitan JOSEPH, to provide clergy as needed. We need some help to expedite these requests and remove obstacles where they arise.

The *Ritual* might be ready for publication at some point this year.

The type-setting and graphic design are underway already.

The Altar Missal will continue to be made ready for publication.

It is estimated that this will take another two years of type-setting and graphic design work before it is ready for publication. The work is currently underway, Ian Abodeely has been working with Fr. Fenton, and the first section is already published.

We will have a meeting during the Archdiocese Convention in Grand Rapids this July. We are also preparing a multi-media presentation on the Christian origins of our Western culture and how this can be used to our advantage in living out our Orthodox life and spirituality.

How we are staffed

Bishop John (Abdallah) is our Auxiliary Bishop who attends to the needs of each parish and all of our clergy.

Fr. Edward Hughes is the Vicar General. I work with Bishop John to oversee all of the work of the Vicariate as outlined above.

Fr. John Fenton is the administrative assistant. He helps to handle almost all of the logistics involved in our various projects and on-going ministries. He prepares the *Ordo* annually.

Ian Abodeely serves as a liturgical and music resource person to provide support to any parish that requests it. He also is doing research, typesetting, and graphic design work for the Altar Missal project.

Fr. Bernard Kinnick publishes *Credo* and the calendar. His wife Karen is the managing editor.

Mr. Dale Crakes provides research and support for any and all of our projects as needed.

Fr. Michael Kaiser, Fr. George Morelli, and Mrs. Elaine Hyder serve on the Western Rite Commission. This body was established in 1962 by Metropolitan Antony Bashir to be made up of "Byzantine Rite clergy of proven academic standing" to "Assist the Vicar General in all possible ways, especially in reference to the liturgical rite."

Each of the 33 priests and 13 deacons of the Vicariate staff the individual parishes and missions. They are responsible for carrying out our goals in the parishes.

Budget 2020

Our Budget allocation is \$15,000 for 2020.

- \$3,000. Reimbursement for the assistant @ \$250 per month.
- \$1,000 Mailing for *Credo* magazine
- \$2,000 Convention expense, including travel & lodging for Hughes & Fenton
- \$4,500 Travel & lodging for parish visits.
- \$1,500 Travel & lodging for other meetings throughout the year.
- \$3,000 Typesetting for publications

Respectfully submitted,
V. Rev. Edward Hughes

