



THE MOST REVEREND
METROPOLITAN JOSEPH
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ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN

THE MOST REVEREND METROPOLITAN PHILIP -- FOUNDER

✧ A SISTERHOOD SERVING CHRIST THROUGH SERVING OTHERS ✧

❖ NORTH AMERICAN BOARD ❖

◆ PRESIDENT ◆

November 18, 2018



Your Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH, Esteemed Hierarchs, Reverend Clergy & Sisters in Christ –

Christ is in our midst!

My initial President's letter normally goes out in either August or September depending on the amount of information to be conveyed. You may have thought I had "fallen off the face of the Earth" when I didn't send out my usual missive, but I have been VERY active "behind the scenes" (which included negotiating a hotel contract for over three months, but more on that later!). Rather than sending you numerous letters and/or emails alerting you as to what was happening, I thought I'd wrap everything up with a neat little bow and send it all at once!

So, in the words of Willy Wonka, "So much time and so little to do - wait a minute! Strike that! Reverse it," here we go ...

The last gathering of the North American Board was held at the Antiochian Village during the weekend of July 20 through 22. We experienced beautiful weather, a nice turnout of women at our NAB meeting, and got a lot accomplished in a condensed period of time (due to the Archdiocesan Bible Bowl and Oratorical Competition being held that same weekend). We were also gifted with a spiritual and uplifting message from His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH, as well as learning about our newest NAB Project.

As you're already aware from the beautiful materials that you've received from Vice President/NAB Project Coordinator Kh. Suzanne Murphy, the NAB Project for 2019 will be ***"Building a New Cathedral for our Archdiocese at the Antiochian Village."*** At our meeting in July, His Eminence asked us, "What is more precious to all of us than the Antiochian Village?," which led to us recalling the words of His Eminence Metropolitan PHILIP of Thrice-Blessed Memory when he said, "The Antiochian Village is the HEART of our Archdiocese."

As always, the Antiochian Women in each parish are asked to support the NAB Project – including Antiochian Women's Month in March. Your Diocesan Treasurer should send to the NAB Treasurer all monies collected **no later than** by May 1, 2019. Individual contributions can also be made via the link on the Antiochian Women's website. You can learn all about the NAB Project and download the poster, as well as additional materials, via the following link: <http://www.antiochian.org/regulararticle/175>.

For our 2018 Project, ***"Vocations: Encouraging, Supporting, Funding,"*** we were honored to present Metropolitan JOSEPH with a check in the amount of \$109,908.99. We also gave him a check for \$6,093.00 which included late monies received towards our 2017 Project of ***"Strengthening the Ministries of Our Church,"*** bringing the total raised for that Project to \$123,008.37. God bless you, ladies, for your support of both of these worthy causes!

Ms. Dianne M. O'Regan ❖ PRESIDENT of the North American Board
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❖ ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN WOMEN OF NORTH AMERICA ❖

Listed below are highlights and summaries of the work that the NAB has done over the past few months. I urge each of you to share this information with the chapters throughout your respective Dioceses:

Vision 20/20 – At the 2017 Archdiocese Convention, I challenged the Diocesan Presidents, Officers and Coordinators with a new goal entitled, “Vision 20/20.” It is hoped that by the Year 2020 every church and mission on the North American continent will have an active Antiochian Women’s chapter. Thank you to everyone for getting on board with this task. At our last NAB meeting, our treasury reflected an increase in more chapters paying dues and Project monies than in the past! God bless you, and keep up the good work!

Board of Trustees Meeting – In late October, I was blessed to attend and report at the Archdiocese Board of Trustees Meeting hosted by St. George Cathedral in Worcester, Massachusetts. Vice-Chair Fawaz el Khoury introduced the Antiochian Women as “being the backbone of the Archdiocese,” but Metropolitan JOSEPH – who was sitting nearby – said, “Yes, but they are also the VEINS of the Archdiocese!” I have attached a copy of my report so that all of you can read it. It was very well-received, and we received a round of applause for our hard work. Although the weather was frightful (Massachusetts experienced a Nor’easter with wind and rain and plummeting temperatures), the weekend was very productive and a great deal of work was accomplished.

Public Relations – Look for the Fall edition of the NAB’s newsletter, *Diakonia*, which will be sent to you soon, highlighting the Antiochian Women of the Diocese of Ottawa, Eastern Canada, and Upstate New York. In addition to publishing *Diakonia*, NAB PR Coordinator Melinda Bentz continues to update our NAB Facebook page. On one recent post, we received over 2,000 “hits”! Finally, I urge you to read the lovely article in the current edition of The Word entitled “Myrrh-Bearing Women,” by Maria Koropska from the Antiochian Women of the East.

Humanitarian – We learned a few weeks ago that Skiye Rizk, the grandmother of our dear Sister in Christ and Humanitarian Coordinator, Lauren Ferris (and the mother of Laila Rizk Ferris, an NAB Past President, as well as NAB’s current Finance Coordinator and Parliamentarian), entered into Eternal Life at the age of 96 years. Lauren’s Uncle Jack (her father’s brother) also reposed in the Lord that same day! Please keep Lauren, Laila, and the extended Rizk and Ferris families in your prayers, and may Skiye’s and Jack’s memories be eternal!

Despite this sad news, Lauren has been working to provide us with information regarding our newest FOCUS “Act of Mercy” which will highlight their “Educational Support for Children” program. More information will be forthcoming. We also hope to update the “Acts of Mercy” booklet as originally created by Kh. Dannie Moore when she served as the NAB Humanitarian Coordinator several years ago.

Membership – In late September, we also received sad news that NAB Membership Coordinator Mary Lou Catelli’s mother-in-law, Dorothy, passed into Eternal Life. I urge each of you to keep Mary Lou, her husband, Bill, and the Catelli family in your prayers, and that Dorothy’s memory be eternal!

Mary Lou continues to work on ways to grow our membership, particularly among the **young** women in our parishes. Also, don’t forget that we have Antiochian Women’s pins for sale – they can be used as

gifts for the Antiochian Women in your churches: for birthdays, name's days, the Nativity, and so much more. Remember that *every* woman in the Archdiocese – from 19 to 99+ – is an Antiochian Woman! Contact Immediate Past President Violet Robbat at vmkrobbat@yahoo.com for purchasing information.

Religious – Kh. Dannie Moore continues to provide us with beautiful and informative materials on feast days and the lives of the saints. With the blessing of NAB Spiritual Advisor His Grace Bishop JOHN, she has chosen *“The Sweetness of Grace....Stories of Christian Trial & Victory”* by Constantina R. Palmer for our Antiochian Women's Book Club selection. Numerous parishes throughout the Archdiocese have participated in these Book Clubs; it's a great way to bring the women of your church together for love, learning and fellowship. Kh. Dannie recently sent study questions to each of the Dioceses which will assist the women in discussing this wonderful book.

Scholarship – Three deserving women – one from the Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest, and two from the Diocese of Los Angeles and the West – were awarded Antiochian Women Scholarships this past summer in the amount of \$500 each. Eligibility requires an Antiochian Woman to be 26 years of age or older and in need of financial assistance towards the cost of education or training to improve themselves and their families. For the first time, the scholarship awards were mailed to each recipient's parish priest who presented it in front of their respective congregations immediately following Divine Liturgy. By doing this, we hope to start honoring these women in front of their individual church communities, and encouraging others across the Archdiocese to apply for these funds.

Archdiocesan Website – I continue to work with the staff at the Antiochian Archdiocese's website to get our materials on-line. I recently met with Deacon Christian Manasseh while we were in Massachusetts for the Board of Trustees weekend. Deacon Christian asked for patience, as the staff is small and works on a part-time basis. In addition, he noted there are additional “kinks” to be worked out.

2019 Archdiocese Convention – If you haven't done so already, mark your calendars for **Wednesday, July 24, 2019** when the Antiochian Women will hold our Brunch and Meeting as part of the 2019 Archdiocese Convention in Grand Rapids, Michigan. I've already started working closely with the local ladies who are organizing this event, and we hope to have some surprises in addition to the food, fun and fellowship that we normally experience! I urge you to register NOW (and make hotel reservations) via <https://ac2019gr.org/>. Election of NAB Officers for 2019-2021 will also take place while we are in Grand Rapids. If you are interested in serving as an Officer or Coordinator for the NAB, please contact Nomination Chair (and Immediate Past President) Violet Robbat at vmkrobbat@yahoo.com.

AND FINALLY

2019 Mid-Winter Meetings aka “Let's Head to the West” – With the blessing of Metropolitan JOSEPH, the 2019 NAB Mid-Winter Meetings will be held from **Friday, February 8 through Sunday, February 10, 2019** at St. Luke's Orthodox Church in Garden Grove, California.

As I noted earlier in my letter, and by way of some “brief” history, after receiving permission from His Eminence at the NAB Sumer Meetings to hold our Mid-Winter Meetings in the West, I immediately contacted our original choice, St. George Orthodox Church in Phoenix, Arizona. After several weeks of negotiations with numerous properties, it was found that hotel rates were prohibitive (rates are HIGH in

Arizona in February!). Our focus then moved to Southern California, where I worked hand-in-hand with Diocesan President Charmaine Darmour in finding a hotel to meet our needs. The NAB officers ultimately narrowed it down to two properties, and I received the contracts in mid-September. Unfortunately, these contracts left us open to liabilities that were unacceptable. I then reached out to Lew Maloof who resides in the area and has negotiated contracts on behalf of the Diocese, and – after ANOTHER month of negotiations – we were able to secure rooms at the Delta Hotels by Marriott in Garden Grove, California. Hooray!!!

On top of all of the above, I learned that we were no longer able to register on-line via the Archdiocese’s Conference & Meetings site, so the ladies in the Diocese of Los Angeles and the West worked on setting up an on-line portal for us to register!

I’ve attached the registration form containing TWO links: one for registration for the meetings/meals/etc., and one for the hotel. ALL meals – from Friday evening through Sunday morning coffee hour – will be held at St. Luke’s, which is less than two miles from the host hotel. The registration fees will “offset” the costs incurred by the St. Luke community for feeding us and holding our meetings in their Parish Hall. The cost of the Delta Hotels by Marriott was highly competitive and allows us to check in as early as Thursday, February 7 with check-out on Sunday, February 10.

NAC Teen SOYO will also be joining us for the weekend, and we hope to be able to find time to gather with them as we have in the past, with great success.

Finally, all good things must come to an end, and these next eight months will see the conclusion of the terms for your current NAB Officers. However, if anything, we’re “speeding up” on our work in order to accomplish our goals! The BIG tasks include updating/finalizing our Membership Handbook, and getting materials posted on the Archdiocesan webpage and our Facebook site, as well as several other activities. I’m excited about the year ahead as we work together as a “Sisterhood Serving Christ Through Serving Others.”

As we approach the Nativity of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ, may you and yours be bestowed with God’s grace and blessings. Please do not hesitate to contact me with updates, as well as questions or concerns.

Yours in Christ,

/s/ Dianne

Dianne O’Regan, President
North American Board of the Antiochian Women