

MINUTES OF THE 23RD ASSEMBLY
OF THE
DIOCESE OF EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

The 23rd Annual Assembly of the Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania of the Orthodox Church in America was convened on Saturday, June 28, 1986 at St. Tikhon's Seminary/Monastery, South Canaan, Pennsylvania.

His Grace, Bishop HERMAN, Bishop of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania celebrated the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy and Molieben.

MORNING SESSION

Following the Divine Liturgy, the Assembly gathered at the Seminary gymnasium and at 11:40 a.m., "O Heavenly King" was sung by the faithful. His Grace, Bishop Herman declared the 23rd Diocesan Assembly to be in session. His Grace welcomed all Assembly delegates and participants to the Diocesan Church School Conference.

Fr. Daniel Donlick read the agenda and noted that since there was a delay in the opening of the Assembly, the lunch time will be moved to 1:00 p.m. No further changes were made on the agenda. The agenda, as read, was accepted by the Assembly.

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE:

Fr. John Onofrey submitted the following report:

Hierarch	1
Clergy	34
Laity	29
Alternates	3
Diocesan Council	1
Department Chairmen	2
Observers	8

for a total of 78 present at the Assembly. Fr. Onofrey reported that 65 of the 78 present are eligible for voting.

ELECTION OF ASSEMBLY OFFICERS:

Fr. Donlick put forth the following clergy and laity for the Assembly Officers:

Clergy Vice-Chairman ----- Fr. Daniel Geeza

Lay Vice-Chairman ----- Dr. Alexander Pianovich

There were no further nominations from the floor. Fr. Joseph Gallick moved to close the nominations. Fr. Theodore Shomsky seconded. Fr. John Kuchta moved to accept the names submitted. Fr. Michael Hatrak seconded. Motion passed.

For the office of Secretary:

Clergy Secretary ----- Fr. Eugene Vansuch

Lay Secretary ----- Mr. David Brzuchalski

There were no further nominations from the floor. Mr. Alan Pcsolyar moved to close the nominations. Fr. Daniel Kovalak seconded. Fr. David Lisko moved to accept the names submitted. Fr. Claude Vinyard seconded. Motion passed.

Fr. Donlick announced the following committee appointments approved by His Grace, Bishop HERMAN. Credentials Committee: Fr. Michael Hatrak and Fr. John Onofrey; Registration: Matushka Dorothy Sulich; Resolution Committee: Fr. Vladimir Borichevsky, Fr. John Kuchta and Mr. John Thoenebe.

MINUTES OF THE 1985 ASSEMBLY:

The minutes of the 1985 Assembly were presented. Fr. Claude Vinyard reported a correction. Page 3, the figure should read \$680.00 instead of \$68.00. No other corrections were reported. Fr. Joseph Gallick moved to accept the minutes of the 1985 Assembly as corrected. Fr. David Lisko seconded. Motion passed.

REPORT OF THE DIOCESAN BISHOP:

His Grace, Bishop HERMAN read his report to the venerable clergy and lay delegates to the 23rd Assembly and to those assembled for the Annual Church School Conference. A copy of the Bishop's address is attached to the official minutes and will appear in the next issue of YOUR DIOCESE ALIVE.

Fr. Daniel Geeza thanked His Grace, Bishop HERMAN for his report.

REPORT OF THE DIOCESAN COUNCIL SECRETARY:

Mrs. Marie McCarty entertained questions on the report which was included in the delegate's Assembly packet. Fr. Joseph Martin moved to accept the report of the Diocesan Council Secretary. Mr. Paul Gozick seconded. Motion passed.

REPORT OF THE DIOCESAN TREASURER:

Fr. Donlick reported there are two reports contained in the delegates Assembly packet. The first report covers the period from Jan. 1, 1985 to Dec. 31, 1985 and the second report covers the period from Jan. 1, 1986 to May 31, 1986. A question from the floor concerned the possibility of receiving the Assembly packet in advance in order that the reports could be discussed by parishes prior to the Assembly. Fr. Donlick stated that this concern could be raised under New Business.

Should parishes have any questions about their individual statistics published in the report, Fr. Donlick will meet with them during the Assembly.

REPORT OF THE AUDITORS:

Mr. Gene Haverlak read his report to the Assembly, a letter dated June 28, 1986 which was submitted to His Grace, Bishop HERMAN. A copy of the letter is attached to the official minutes. The financial records and statements submitted were audited and found to be accurate.

Fr. George Pawlush moved to accept the Reports of the Treasurer and Auditors. Fr. Theodore Shomsky seconded. Motion passed.

DIOCESAN DEANERY REPORTS:

Fr. Geeza referred all delegates to the Deanery Reports in the Assembly packet. Fr. Andrew Shuga moved to accept the Deanery Reports. Fr. Joseph Woodill seconded. Motion passed.

DIOCESAN DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

A. Department of Missions

Lenora Golamis, Treasurer and delegate from Holy Cross Orthodox Church, Williamsport, reported on the progress and activities of her parish. She thanked Bishop HERMAN and all parishes for their support of the mission in Williamsport.

Fr. John Kuchta moved to accept the Department of Mission report. Fr. Michael Evans seconded. Motion passed.

B. Department of Youth:

Mr. Martin Paluch reported that the Department is composed of the Bishop, several clergy and 28 Youth Coordinators. There are five parishes which have not appointed a Youth Coordinator as per resolution of a previous Diocesan Assembly. Martin will be in communication with these parishes to have a coordinator appointed. Martin commented that there are over 1200 youth in the Diocese and our annual Camps and Encounters try to reach as many as possible. This July there will be a Camp for girls, a Camp for boys and a Teen Camp the weekend of July 25-28.

Fr. Joseph Martin moved to accept the Department of Youth report. Fr. Andrew Shuga seconded. Motion passed.

C. Department of Lay Ministry & Stewardship

Fr. Claude Vinyard referred all delegates to his report in the Assembly packet. He noted the following correction: The Annual Seniors Day is being rescheduled from July 5th to August 9th.

Fr. Dimitri Voytilla moved to accept the Department of Lay Ministry & Stewardship Report. Fr. John Udics seconded. Motion passed.

D. Department of Publications

Fr. Jason Kappanadze stated that the latest issue of YOUR DIOCESE ALIVE, which was to have been distributed at the Assembly, will be published in July. A report of the Assembly will be included in the issue. Extra copies will be published and distributed at the All American Council in Washington, D.C. in August. Fr. Jason proudly announced the addition of an illustrator to the staff of the publication. He thanked all advertisers and contributors to the magazine. Through the generosity of the Orthodox Christian Communications Services Association of Philadelphia, use of equipment with which to publish the magazine has been provided. The appropriation of \$7,000.00 from last year's budget to purchase the Seminary's I.B.M. typesetter is thereby cancelled, relieving the Diocese of the financial responsibility.

Fr. Daniel Rassetar moved to accept the report of the Department of Publications. Fr. David Shewczyk seconded. Motion passed.

E. Department of Insurance

Mrs. Marie Hudock referred all delegates to her report in the packet. She answered serveral inquiries regarding the rates and plans provided by our coverages.

Mr. Donald Debus moved to accept the Department of Insurance report. Mr. John Thoenebe seconded. Motion passed.

The morning session concluded at 12:45 p.m. Lunch was served to the delegates in the Monastery Dining Hall.

AFTERNOON SESSION

The Assembly reconvened at 2:00 p.m. under the chairmanship of Fr. Daniel Geeza. The Credentials Committee was called upon to give a report. Fr. John Onofrey reported the following in attendance for the afternoon session:

Hierarch	1
Clergy	34
Laity	30
Alternates	3
Diocesan Council	1
Department Chairmen	2
Observers	8

for a total of 79 present at the session. Fr. Onofrey reported that 66 of the 79 present are eligible for voting.

DIOCESAN DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

Fr. John Kowalczyk referred all delegates to his report in the Assembly packet.

Mr. John Hockin moved to accept the Department of Religious Education report and Mr. Donald Debus seconded the motion. Motion passed.

DIOCESAN MILLENIUM COMMITTEE REPORT:

His Grace, Bishop HERMAN referred to the published addendum to his address which was distributed to all delegates. In his report he announced the committee appointments for the Diocesan Millenium celebration. Services will be conducted in all deaneries along with several conferences which will be held in the coming two years. Any persons wanting to join the Millenium Committee are welcome to contact His Grace. A meeting will be held after July 7th to formulate plans for the celebration.

The Lay Vice-Chairman, Dr. Alexander Pianovich conducted the session at this point.

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 1987:

Dr. Pianovich referred all delegates to the Proposed Budget contained in the Assembly packet. Fr. Donlick answered questions regarding the budget. In response to the increase in the PP&L expenditure, Fr. Donlick noted the sharp increase in the PP&L rate and this increase was projected into the budget. Concerning the YOUR DIOCESE ALIVE budget, Fr. Jason Kappanadze noted that through the generosity of the printer we are able to produce the publication at a minimal cost. If we were to pay full cost for the quality of the publication it would cost 2 to 3 times more than we are presently paying. The publication looks a lot more expensive that what we are paying for.

Fr. David Lisko moved to accept the proposed budget for 1987. Mr. Joseph Sokol seconded. Motion passed.

RESOLUTIONS FOR THE ALL AMERICAN COUNCIL:

THE CELEBRATION OF THE MILLENIUM

"In 1988, the Orthodox Church throughout the world will join the Church in Russia in the celebration of the Millenium of the Baptism of Russia.

In that the Orthodox Church in America was originally established on this continent some two hundred years ago (1794) by Missionaries sent by the Church in Russia, it behooves us in America to celebrate this joyous Orthodox Festival with appropriate liturgical ceremonies and festivities.

In preparation for this event special liturgical services for the occasion should be prepared and celebrated, choral celebrations, lectures, talks and sermons should be prepared and delivered to inform the faithful and the friends of Orthodoxy of the significance of this event to the Orthodox Church in America.

We should encourage members of our parishes to organize and to participate in pilgrimages that will visit the Holy Places in Russia in order to participate in the celebration of this event and the places connected with the Baptism of Russia.

We encourage the faithful to offer up prayers to prepare for this celebration.

The Diocesan celebration for the Millenium should take place at St. Tikhon's Monastery and St. Tikhon's Seminary."

Fr. Vladimir Borichevsky moved to adopt the proposed resolution and that it be presented to the National Church for appropriate action. Mr. John Naughton seconded. Motion passed.

AGAINST PORNOGRAPHY

"Glory to Jesus Christ!

The family unit is not only the backbone of the society in which we live, but the foundational unit of the Orthodox Church, serving as an extension of the Kingdom of God into every home.

The foundation of the family itself resides in Christian marriage; the uniting of a man and a woman in a special bond of love - a love so great, it is likened to that of Christ for His Church (Ephesians 5).

Christian Orthodoxy holds firmly to the teaching that sexual relations, as a God-given human capacity, are properly exercised in Sacramental marriage. Within this framework, sexual relations express the bond of love of the spouses, meet the physical needs of the spouses, and serve to nurture and perpetuate the human race. As a result, sexual relations are a blessed and holy part of life when practiced in the only setting appropriate to them: Christian Marriage.

However, sexual relations may also be turned from their proper purposes to inappropriate expressions. One of these is pornography. Pornography promotes sexual relations as ends in themselves; a hedonistic philosophy contrary to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It promotes values which degrade, trivialize and cheapen sexual relations, removing from them their sanctity and taking them from their God-given context; marriage and family. It's effects upon the whole person - mind, body and spirit - are often devastating. Thus, the very fabric of our society and the foundational unit of the Church, is weakened.

Be it therefore RESOLVED that the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania of the Orthodox Church in America, in accordance with our declaration of "The Year of the Family", affirms its outrage at the presence and availability of pornography not only within our local respective communities, but in society as a whole. We call upon all of the faithful of our Diocese to, first, themselves abstain from pornography, and further, to initiate and support measures which will bring the display and distribution of pornography, and thereby its harmful effects, to a halt.

Be it further resolved that this Assembly move the above resolution of this Diocese for consideration at the Eighth All American Council of the Orthodox Church in America for adoption."

Fr. Vladimir Borichevsky moved to adopt the proposed resolution against pornography. Mr. John Naughton seconded. Motion passed.

MEDICAL INSURANCE:

"We resolve that the current Diocesan Medical Insurance Program which has been in existence over ten years through Blue Cross of Northeastern Pennsylvania is the medical insurance program available to all O.C.A. employees nationwide. Also, we unanimously approve the existing medical program and reject any mandatory program that would not be to our long range best interests."

Fr. John Kuchta moved to adopt the proposed resolution of Medical Insurance coverage. Fr. Joseph Gallick seconded. Motion passed.

INSURANCE RESOLUTION:

"Be it resolved that in lieu of increasing the amount of the current group term life insurance, that an option be permitted converting the existing term life insurance to a group permanent life insurance program at approximately the same monthly premium."

Fr. John Kuchta moved to adopt the proposed resolution on Insurance. Mr. John Naughton seconded. Motion passed.

PENSION PLAN BY-LAW CHANGE:

"In view of the current provisions and interpretation of the By-Laws and Articles of the Pension Plan of the Orthodox Church in America, a recipient of the pension is not permitted to receive any compensation for any position or task that he may be assigned by his Diocesan Bishop while receiving a pension.

Be it resolved that the By-Laws of the Pension Plan be so amended as to give the Diocesan Bishop the option at his discretion to assign a cleric receiving a pension to whatever task he may deem necessary, appropriate for the good of the Church, with compensation without jeopardizing his pension, providing his assignment does not deprive an active O.C.A. clergyman from a position that he can perform."

Fr. Claude Vinyard moved to adopt the proposed resolution on the Pension Plan. Mr. Walter Proch seconded. Motion passed.

OTHER MATTERS:

Mr. Steve Kundrat asked whether the delegate packet could be distributed prior to the Assembly to allow the delegates more time for preparation. It was reported that most of the information contained in the reports is published in YOUR DIOCESE ALIVE and that every delegate and priest should share Diocesan information with the parish they represent.

A question was asked of Fr. Donlick pertaining to the fiscal year of the Diocese. A suggestion was made to have the Fiscal Year run from June 1 to May 31 of each year. In this way, the Financial Report would be current no matter when in the Summer our Diocesan Assembly would be held. Fr. Donlick replied that at one time the Diocese operated on that calculation and the result was that more confusion existed with

the parishes as many of them did not comply with their payments on time and were not included in the Financial Report. It would be a better system if all parishes were to comply with having their payments sent in before the Fiscal Year ended, but since there was much confusion the Fiscal Year was changed to the present system.

His Grace, Bishop HERMAN reported that the Diocese will host the Fall Session of the Holy Synod of Bishops in October. On October 23, our Diocese will host a dinner in honor of our Primate, His Beatitude, Metropolitan THEODOSIUS, who will be celebrating the Silver Anniversary of his ordination to the Holy Priesthood.

The date for next year's Assembly will be Saturday, August 22, 1987.

ADJOURNMENT:

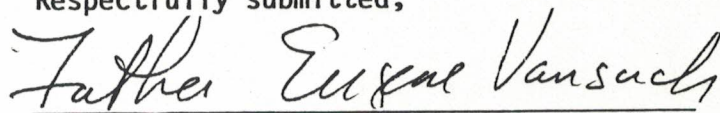
Mr. John Naughton moved that the 23rd Diocesan Assembly be adjourned. Mr. Donald Debus seconded. Motion passed.

His Grace, Bishop HERMAN closed the Assembly at 3:35 p.m.

Approved By:


His Grace, Bishop HERMAN

Respectfully submitted,


Fr. Eugene Vansuch


Mr. David Brzuchalski