



ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN LAITY

August 20, 2013

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Dear Orthodox Christian Laity Supporters,

It is a blessing and responsibility to serve as the twelfth president of Orthodox Christian Laity. August is the time of the year that we invite you to participate in our **Annual Angel Fund Program** which supports the newly revamped OCL web site www.ocl.org and the expenses of our Annual Meeting and Program. **For details see the attached flyer.** The focus of this year's meeting is putting the work of the Assembly of Bishops into a context and perspective. The group has been meeting since 2008 in person as well as regular conference calls by the Committees. On Saturday, November 2, we will be sponsoring a community forum addressing this topic. We plan to have the forum videotaped and available on our website. Needless to say all of this along with our other educational efforts costs money and without your generosity, nothing can happen.

My tenure as president can be characterized as a year of "watchful waiting" -a time of vigilance- to see how the work of the Assembly of Bishops is progressing. We want to encourage all of you to put the website of the Assembly of Bishops www.assemblyofbishops.org on your "favorites" list. We hope that this site stays focused on the work of the Assembly and the Committees, where the work is being done, so that the laity can be informed of how the restructuring of the Church is progressing. Most importantly we ask you to pray for all our bishops as they meet once again for the fourth time September 17-19, 2013 at the Chicago Marriott Schaumburg, Illinois. We all need to pay attention to the work of the Assembly because it is about creating canonical order, unity and self-governance for the Orthodox Christian Church in North and Central America.

Regrettably, during this period of watchful waiting I am amazed at how few of us are involved and/or informed about the work of the Assembly. Selected laypersons and clergy have been appointed as liaisons to Assembly committees but unfortunately little or no input has been sought from the enormous talent of laypersons and clergy who comprise the Orthodox Christian Church in America and to my knowledge very few parishes have shared information with their parishioners. That means that many of us are virtually in the dark about what is going on. A synergy of all of us needs to be developed as part of this process of restructuring. Top down and bottom up inputs are needed for a successful outcome. OCL has supported the work of the Assembly from day one when in 2008 the Synaxis of Patriarchs announced the establishment of the Assemblies. We have kept you informed via our web site. We have also provided the Assembly with financial support of **\$20,000** raised by you **our OCL** membership. One of the things you can do at the local level is to energize your parish to talk about the work of the Assembly.

We ask you to be part of the OCL Angel Fund Appeal so that you can help us through our website and programs to support keeping Orthodox Christians informed. Thank you for your consideration. I will look forward to seeing some of you in Northern CA for our 26th. Annual Meeting!

Susan W. Haikalis

Susan W. Haikalis
President, OCL