

Enhancing Orthodox Christian Unity

AIOPA Update for Orthodox Christian Laity

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Agenda

- AOCB/AIOPA - Positioning within AoB
- AOCB - Mission Statement and Participants
- AIOPA - Mission, 5 Domains and 5 Work Groups
- AIOPA - Activities Plan and Status Update
- AIOPA - Parishes Engagement and Relationships
- AIOPA - Maintaining Momentum
- Q&A

AoB - Mission Statement and Strategic Areas Of Focus

- Canonical organization of the Orthodox Diaspora: **one bishop one city**
- Mission: preserve and contribute to the unity of the Orthodox Church in the United States of America by furthering her spiritual, theological, ecclesiological, canonical, educational, missionary, and philanthropic aims.
- 16 Committees / 16 Strategic Goals

ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN UNITY & OUTREACH

- Clergy Matters
- Canonical Regional Planning
- Ecumenical Relations

COMMON ORTHODOX WITNESS

- Pastoral Practice
- Church & Society
- Liturgical

MINISTRIES & INITIATIVES

- Youth
- Theological Education
- Monastic
- Legal Affairs
- Financial Matters
- Charitable Task Force

ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

- Agencies and Commissions, Affiliate Ministries and Associations
- Canonical Matters
- Military Chaplaincy
- Executive

AoB - Committee for Canonical Regional Planning

- work with pan-Orthodox Clergy Brotherhoods (“Clergy Brotherhoods”) and inter-Orthodox Parish Associations “Associations” (consisting of clergy and lay representatives from all Orthodox parishes) to efficiently facilitate and maintain pan-Orthodox parish-to-parish communications, activities and cooperation (the “One Church Initiative”) in the pilot metro areas;
- work with the Committee for Clergy Matters to identify entry points for studying and strengthening Clergy Brotherhoods;
- expand the One Church Initiative to help establish effective Clergy Brotherhoods and Associations in several other metro areas to be determined.

AOCB - Mission Statement and Participants

- The Atlanta Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood is under the care of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America
- Mission: To bring people the knowledge of the Orthodox Church and to assist those throughout the city of Atlanta who are in need

The Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation (GOA)

St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church (GOA)

Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church (GOA)

Holy Transfiguration Greek Orthodox Church (GOA)

St. Philothea Greek Orthodox Church (GOA)

Sts. Raphael, Nicholas, and Irene Greek Orthodox Church (GOA)

St. Elizabeth Orthodox Church (ACROD)

St. Mary of Egypt Orthodox Church (ROCOR)

St. Mary Romanian Orthodox Church (Romanian Patriarchate)

Sts. Peter and Paul Serbian Orthodox Church (Serbian)

St. Elias Antiochian Orthodox Church (Antiochian)

St. James Antiochian Orthodox Church (Antiochian)

St. Stephen's Antiochian Orthodox Church (Antiochian)

Church of the Advent, Western Rite Orthodox (Antiochian)

St. Basil the Great Orthodox Mission (OCA)

Sts. Constantine and Helen Church (OCA/ROEA)

St. Innocent Orthodox Church (OCA)

St. John the Wonderworker Church (OCA)

St. Mary of Egypt Orthodox Church (OCA)

AIOPA - Mission Statement

- AIOPA - the Atlanta Inter-Orthodox Parish Association
 - Established on 03/17/2022 as a committee of the AOCB
 - ~ Each Parish represented: 1 Clergy + 1 Laity Parish Council + 1 Laity non-Parish Council
- Mission (from AoB):
 - To make the Orthodox Church presence more visible and to speak with “one strong voice”
 - To address jointly the common interests, needs and concerns of all church members
 - To build strong associations of local Orthodox church communities
 - Parishes of all jurisdictions support and help one another
 - Share talents, and coordinate ministries and programs
 - To encourage communication and interaction among parishioners
 - Minimize jurisdictional barriers among the parishes
 - Develop a strong sense of one local Orthodox Christian Family

AIOPA Organization - 5 Domains

DOING

Making An Impact

- Religious
- Social
- Charity

DEVELOPING

Learning & Growing

- Development

COMMUNICATING

Telling The Story

- Communications

- **DOING:** activities with a direct impact in the life of our orthodox parishioners in the Atlanta area, greater than the sum of what each one of our parishes can individually achieve
- **DEVELOPING:** activities that allow us to learn and grow together as a team, deeper and faster than each one of us can do in our own parish
- **COMMUNICATING:** activities intended to spread the word about the work we are doing and the results we are having, as well as staying connected with the relevant stakeholders

AIOPA Organization - 5 Work Groups

Religious

Fr. George Ac sente

Fr. George Tsahakis

Fr. Michael Tishel

Fr. Nicolae Clempus

Fr. Theodore Ehmer

Fr. Tom Alessandroni

Borko Komnenovic

Eliza Markley

Michael Uhr

Stephen Brannen

Social

Fr. Matthew Dutko

Fr. Miladin Blagojevic

Andrea Uhr

Evelyn Kemp

Garrett Klawuhn

Joston Brown

Julia Hill

Liviu Sofian

Steve Sarantis

Toni Taggart

Charity

Fr. Ben Bruce

Fr. Nicolae Clempus

Fr. Tom Alessandroni

Evelyn Kemp

Jackie Sarantis

Mirjana M. Brockett

Steve Sarantis

Tara Freeman

Tom Taratsas

Development

Fr. George Ac sente

Fr. Jacob Andoun

Florian Ion

John Marion

Michael Uhr

Tom Taratsas

Communications

Fr. Anthony Salzman

Cristina Lekas

Florian Ion

James Tsismanakis

Julia Hill




Natalia Saratsiotis



Regina Nasrallah

- Diversity via Clergy/Laity, Parishes, Jurisdictions distribution

RELIGIOUS CHARITY DEVELOPMENT SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS AOCB/AIOPA





-  Aug'22 The Liturgical Arts Academy
-  Sep'22 Cross Dive
-  Nov'22 Feast of St. John Chrysostom
-  Dec'22 Christmas Candlelight Service and Concert
-  Mar'23 Sunday of Orthodoxy
-  Jun'23 Pentecost Picnic

-  Jul'22 Project Mexico
-  Sep'22 Soles4Souls
-  Nov'22 Children's Healthcare of Atlanta






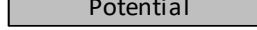
-  Surveys (2)
-  Parish Councils Presidents Round Table (1)
-  Aug'22 Clergy Leadership Development
-  Sep'22 Connect Conference
-  Oct'22 Parish Councils Presidents Round Table
-  Oct'22 Survey
-  22-23 Development Knowledge Sharing

-  Mar'22 Exploring God's Creation
-  May'22 Community Calendar
-  May'22 Sts Constantine and Helen Patronal Feast
-  Jun'22 Chattahoochee Bend
-  Jun'22 YAL Day of Service
-  Jun'22 AHEPA Centennial
-  Jun'22 Movie Screening
-  Jul'22 St. John the Wonderworker Feast
-  Aug'22 Holy Transfiguration Feast
-  Aug'22 St. Elias Centennial Celebration
-  Aug'22 Panagiri honoring Panagia
-  Aug'22 South Atlanta Golf Classic
-  Sep'22 Back to Church
-  Sep'22 St. Philothea Golf Classic
-  Sep'22 Atlanta Greek Festival
-  Oct'22 Serb Fest
-  Oct'22 Cumming Greek Festival

-  Reach Out to Hierarchs (4)
-  The Orthodox Chronicles (4)
-  Clergy Spotlight (6)
-  Educational Sessions (1)
-  May'22 Akron Relationship
-  May'22 AoB Relationship
-  May'22 OCL Relationship
-  Jun'22 AOCB/AIOPA website
-  Aug'22 MEOCCA Relationship
-  Oct'22 OCL 35th Conference
-  Nov'22 Ancient Faith Podcast
-  Facebook, Instagram

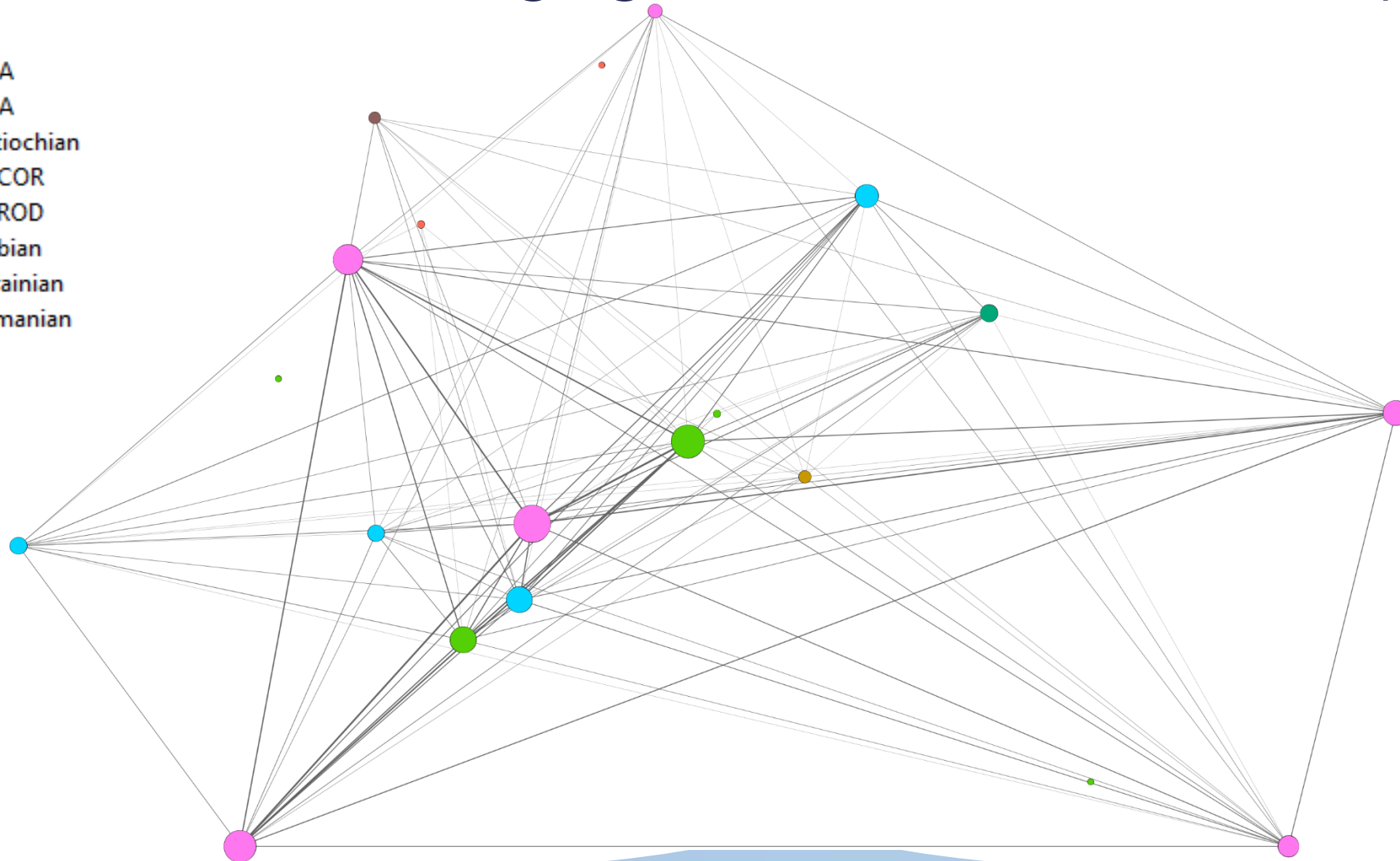
-  AOCB Meetings (4)
-  AIOPA Meetings (6)
-  Oct'22 AIOPA Meeting
-  Oct'22 AOCB Meeting

Activities Plan and Status

Legend		
	Completed	the activity was completed by Date
	On Track	the activity is planned and on track to be completed by Date
	Need Help	the activity requires help to be completed by Date, needs to be discussed
	New Plan Required	the activity cannot be completed by Date, needs to be replanned or cancelled
	Cancelled	the activity was cancelled or reallocated to another activity
	Potential	the activity is under evaluation thus it's not committed yet

AIOPA - Parishes Engagement and Relationships

- GOA
- OCA
- Antiochian
- ROCOR
- ACROD
- Serbian
- Ukrainian
- Romanian

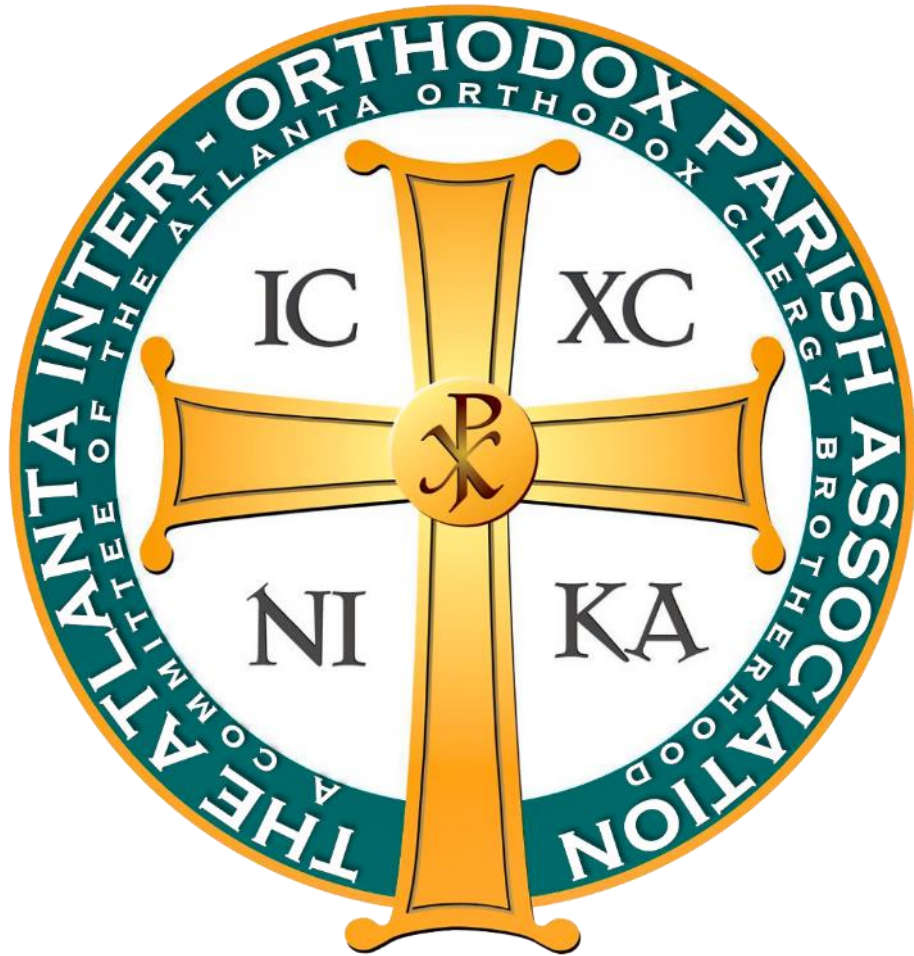


AIOPA - Maintaining Momentum

- Understand the problem and approach
 - Educational sessions, materials and dialog
 - Address unjustified fears and unreasonable dreams
- Reach out
 - Establish contact with other organizations
- Build Relationships
 - Get to know each other within the activities
 - Open to share. Open to learn.
- Engage Hierarchs in direct dialog
 - Laity need Clergy's blessing/support
 - Clergy need Hierarchs' blessing/support
- Stay connected with AoB
 - 16 committees toward the finish line
- God works through people
 - Continue to create, plan and run activities
 - "Pray for miracles but work for results" – St. Augustin

AIOPA - Q&A

1. How much time do you need to commit as a volunteer for AIOPA?
2. Is this a lifetime appointment?
3. How is a person replaced who is not working or participating to the fullest?
4. How do you define AIOPA's success?
5. What are the timelines under which AIOPA operates?
6. What are the main challenges in AIOPA?
7. How do you drive engagement in AIOPA, knowing the work that needs to happen in parishes?
8. Did you experience any internal competition in AIOPA?
9. What would help AIOPA the most?
10. Do people believe in AIOPA's impact?



Enhancing Orthodox Christian Unity

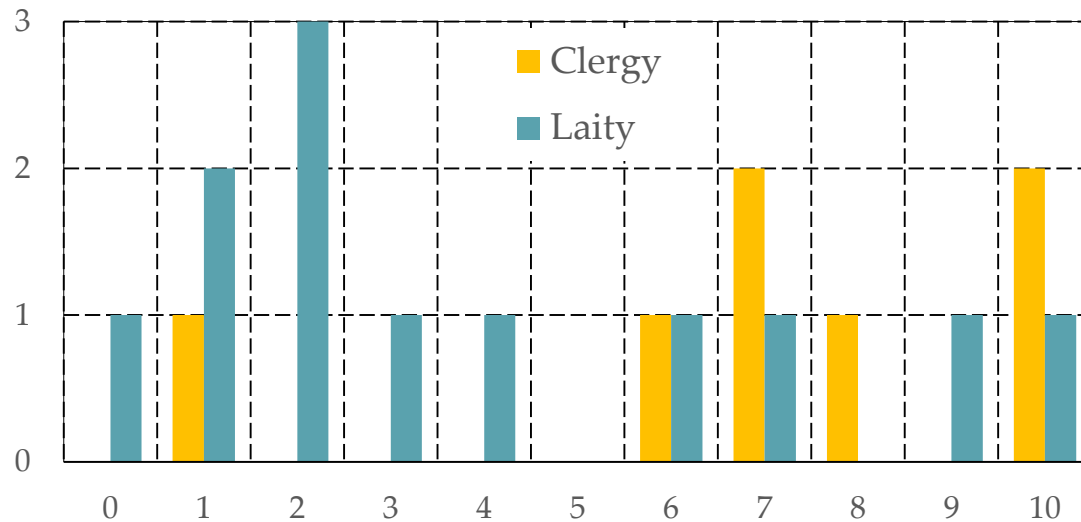
AIOPA Survey 2 results

May 2022

Understanding the Diaspora Problem

On a scale of 0 to 10, how well, would you say, you understand the Problem of the Canonical Organization of the Orthodox Diaspora?

- 0: I have no idea what you're asking about
- 10: I can explain this problem in detail to anyone



What would you need to better understand it?

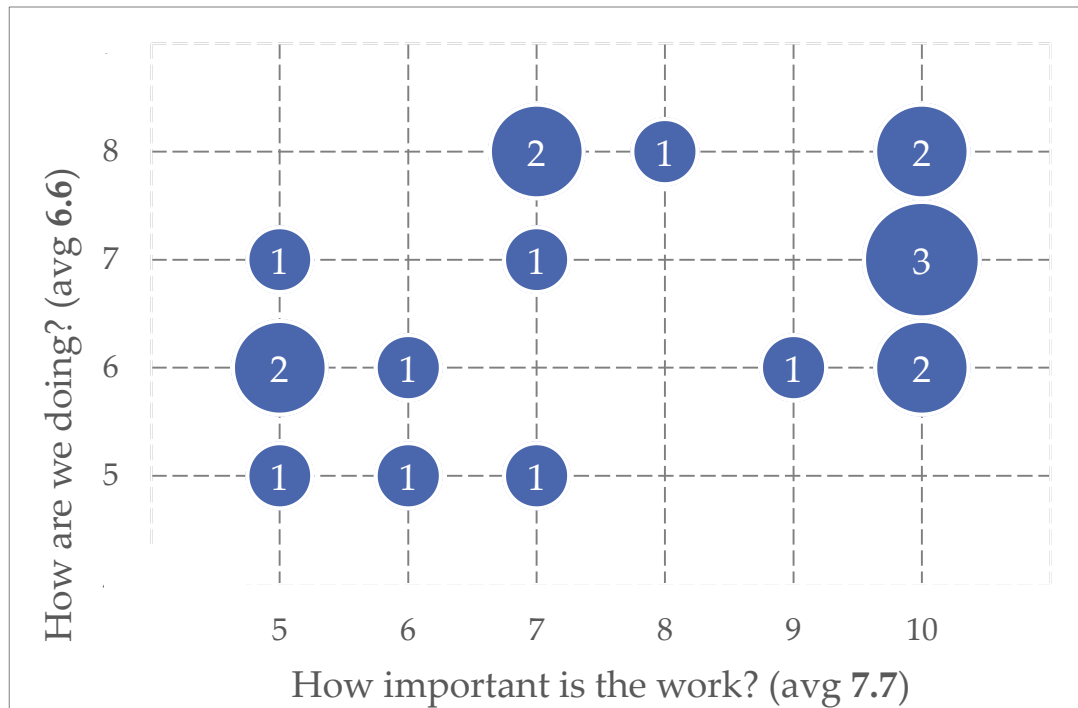
- **Self-Paced Education:**
 - Content: History, Plans, Progress, Obstacles
 - Format: Documents, Articles, Podcasts, Videos
- **Direct Dialog:**
 - Hierarchs
 - Parish Priests
 - AIOPA

Hypotheses:

- Better understanding of the problem leads to higher motivation and engagement in AIOPA
- Better understanding of the problem leads to better explanation of the problem to the entire orthodox population in Atlanta

AIOPA's Work Importance and Effectiveness

How important is the AIOPA work in helping Orthodox Christian Unity & Outreach?
How well is the AIOPA doing?



What would help AIOPA do better?

- AoB Updates for AIOPA Motivation:
 - Hierarchs' Actions
 - 16 Committees Updates + Church Unity Plan Shared
- Communication:
 - Expectations of AIOPA members
 - AIOPA Clergy + Laity Commitment to AIOPA
- Take our time. Be together in meetings/events.
- Rotate events between different parishes.

Hypotheses:

- Higher Importance leads to higher motivation and engagement within AIOPA.
- Self assessment and dialog for improvement on the "How are we doing?"

+/- of Solving the Problem of the Canonical Organization of the Diaspora

ADVANTAGES after solving the Problem

- Not sure it'll ever happen
- Consistency in programs and approaches
- Doing charity at a much bigger level
- Present a Church that's One
- Better unity and cooperation between parishes
- More openness to converts
- More priests, leading to taking vacation time
- Pooled spiritual and material resources
- Only God knows at this point
- Not sure how to answer

DISADVANTAGES after solving the Problem

- No disadvantages
- Some cultural and traditional changes
- Ethnic churches will disappear
- Fewer ethnic parishioners
- One bishop's wisdom vs. six bishops' wisdom
- Extension of Mother Church vs. Autocephalous
- Less unique character and independence
- Fewer parishes
- Only God knows at this point
- Not sure how to answer

Hypotheses:

- Raise the concerns to the AoB representatives
- Discuss the perceived Advantages/Disadvantages to allow addressing facts vs. dreams/fears

Orthodox Diaspora - Problem Impact and Solution Timing

How does the Orthodox Diaspora as it exists in US today affect you and your family?

- It doesn't.
- Several parishes/missions do not have a priest.
- Two Orthodox churches next to each other.
- Church shopping.
- Less unity. More disorganization.
- OCA path multi cultural and multi ethnic.

Hypotheses:

- Higher Affect creates higher motivation and engagement for a solution
- Shorter Times create higher motivation and engagement for a solution

When WILL the Problem be solved?
When CAN the Problem be solved?

