



# Inter Parish Association Updates

Atlanta | Akron | National Release

# 3 Successes

## Organization

- Formed on March 17, 2022 on the existing AOCB structure
- 18 parishes (most as 1 clergy + 2 laity)
- 7 jurisdictions (ACROD, Antiochian, GOA, OCA, ROCOR, Romanian, Serbian)
- 5 workgroups (Religious, Charity, Social, Development, Communication)

## Participation

- 35 events (some started prior to AIOPA, some organized by AIOPA)
- 11 events in average attended by each parish (highest 29)
- 6 parishes in average attended each event (highest 11)

## Awareness

- Website [www.ATLOCB.org](http://www.ATLOCB.org)
- Monthly Newsletter
- Monthly AIOPA/AOCB Meetings







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# 3 Lessons Learned

## **Hierarchs' Engagement with their parishes**

- Explain the Why, Show Your Commitment, Bless the Work, Offer Support, Trust but Verify
- Deep Hierarchs Engagement = High Parish Participation
- Low Hierarchs Engagement = Limited or Accidental Parish Participation
- 4 Hierarchs Letters of Support received so far

## **AIOPA's Duality as Mechanism and Organism**

- Mechanism: Structure + Leadership + Accountability
- Organism: Availability + Passion

## **Maintaining Momentum**

- Appoint people to drive committees and events
- Produce "as easy as possible" information for people to digest
- Persist in creating and running events

# Goals For 2023

## 1. Quarterly Activities per Workgroup

- Focus on activities with Church Unity potential

## 2. Increase Participation

- Per Event and Per Parish
- Offer Value to sustain members' engagement
- Rotation of Laity per Parish

## 3. Outreach

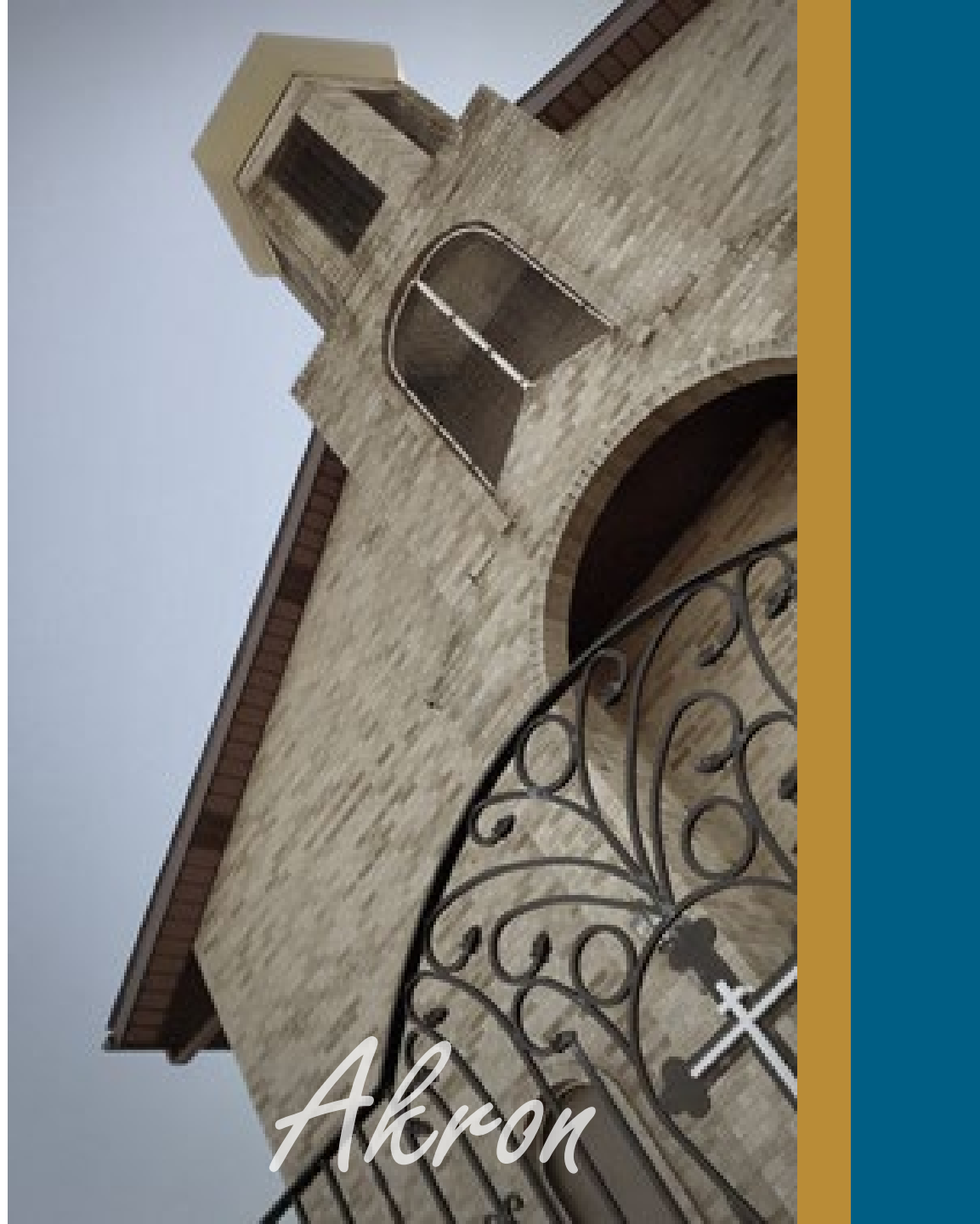
- Remain connected with AoB
- Exchange knowledge with other Inter-Parish Organizations



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# 3 Successes

1. 2 clergy (from the Akron Orthodox Clergy Association) formed the Akron Orthodox Unity Initiative, a group of 2 clergy and 7 laity from 6 Akron parishes & two local Orthodox organizations (COCA - Christian Orthodox Council of Akron & OCW - Orthodox Christian Women) from 4 jurisdictions which met 6 times, starting May 31.
2. Consultant facilitated the development of a list of Opportunities based on a SWOT analysis. The work of the group was introduced to a COCA meeting on September 19 and followed up with a more detailed PowerPoint presentation on October 17. At this time all the members of the Akron Orthodox Unity Initiative became part of COCA.
3. Created in November the shell of the COCA website - <http://OrthodoxAkron.org> Now in the process of adding content, including a joint events/activities calendar.







## 3 Lessons Learned

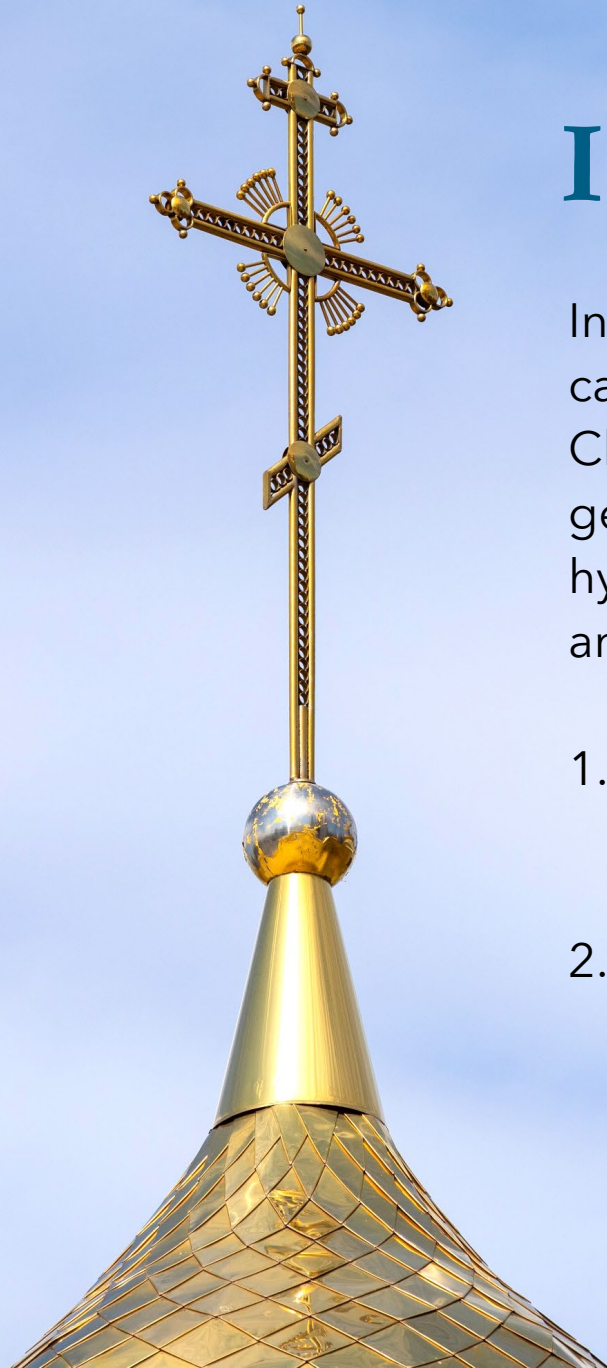
1. One size doesn't fit all: local initiatives must be tailored to fit their own situation.
2. More guidance from the AoB regarding what was expected would have been preferable.
3. Consistent leadership and vision through the entire process.

# Goals For 2023

1. Orthodox Culture Series film festival begins in January - feature length films to be screened in various parishes for the Orthodox and wider Akron community.
2. COCA to discuss on February 4 Opportunities previously developed and assign priorities for those agreed upon. Develop SMART Goals & Objectives based on these decisions.







# Inter-Parish Associations

Inter-Parish Associations promote communication, camaraderie, and cooperation across Orthodox Christian parishes of all jurisdictions in a given geographical area. They are intended to be hyper-local (i.e. the city level) and included both clergy and laity. Their purpose is twofold:

1. They break down barriers across Orthodox Christian jurisdictions and
2. They are the local venue for unified Orthodox Christian witness of Christ's love in the local context.



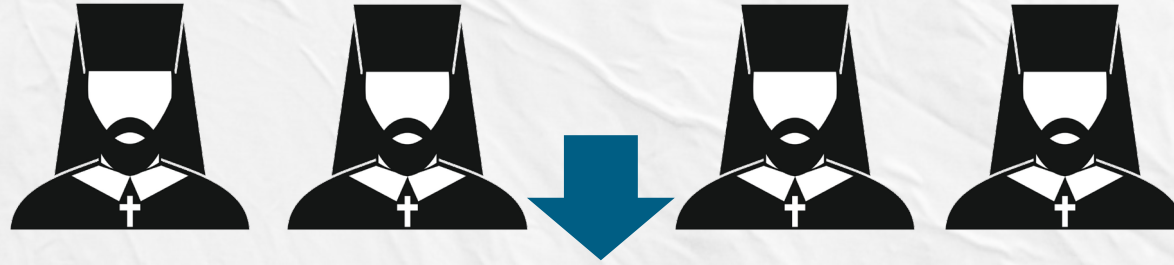
# The AOBs' Function

- 1. Webpage** - The AoB will create a Ministry page on [assemblyofbishops.org](http://assemblyofbishops.org) that will serve as the hub for Inter-parish Associations.
- 2. Registration Process** - The AoB will create a formal, efficient, and standardized registration process.
- 3. Marketing Materials:** The AoB will provide standardized marketing materials and logos that could be adapted and used by registered chapters.
- 4. Monthly Newsletter:** The AoB will provide a platform for Inter-Parish Associations to submit updates for the AoB to consider including in its monthly newsletter.
- 5. Networking:** The AoB will organize a monthly zoom meeting, providing a space for open discussions amongst Inter-Parish Associations.



# Structure

Authority



Inter-Parish Associations



## Assembly of Bishops

Registration  
Orientation  
Network

Support  
Resources  
Promotion



## Local Orthodox Christian Organizations

Cooperation | Endorsement | Support







Questions?