

# Diocese of New England

## A Guide for Delegates to the Diocesan Assembly

The Diocesan Council has created this Guide to help newly-elected delegates to the Diocesan Assembly prepare to participate. The Diocese of New England convenes its annual Diocesan Assembly typically on the last Friday and Saturday of October. Each parish in the diocese may elect one lay delegate for each member of the clergy assigned to that parish.

### **The Diocesan Assembly agenda consists of the following items:**

- ◆ Services (ex., An opening prayer service, Vespers, Divine Liturgy, and closing prayers)
- ◆ Selection of roles for the Assembly (vice-chairs, secretariat, credentials committee, elections and resolutions committee)—some of which are nominated from the floor.
- ◆ Written Reports for the past year with no further action expected (ex. Deanery Reports)
- ◆ Written Reports for the past year which call for a motion at the Assembly (ex. the Compensation Committee recommended revised Clergy Compensation Guidelines)
- ◆ Oral Reports (ex. Hierarch's Report)
- ◆ Presentations that are summaries of written reports
- ◆ Presentations with no prior distribution (ex. guest speakers)
- ◆ Reports from the Diocesan Council carrying out the decisions of previous Assemblies
- ◆ Motions previously distributed (Budget, Compensation Guidelines)
- ◆ Motions first presented at the Assembly (usually in response to discussion and activity during the Assembly)
- ◆ Elections to Diocesan Council and Metropolitan Council of the OCA (3 year terms)

### **The role of the Diocesan Assembly Delegate involves the following activity:**

- ◆ Represent parish by reflecting the parish's view, information, etc., in discussions, including motions.
- ◆ Receive attentively the communications, reports and motions distributed in advance of the Assembly, and read them and discuss within the parish as appropriate.
- ◆ Discuss and vote upon motions and elections, responding to parish circumstances, presentations, and arguments made regarding motions. All deliberation and decision-making is influenced by the worship and prayer of the diocese assembled together under its bishop.
- ◆ Report back to the parish, particularly on matters not distributed before the Assembly meets. Report on important reports and presentations, actions taken and votes held.
- ◆ Deliver printed materials, including the finalized agenda, all reports, handouts, etc., to the parish council.

This means that the delegate has a number of crucial responsibilities before and after the Assembly. The clergy and lay delegates need to collaborate with parish leadership to ensure the parish is well-informed of decisions and activity of the diocese.