

**THE ADVISORY COUNCIL
ASSYRIAN CHURCH OF THE EAST
DIOCESE OF WESTERN CALIFORNIA**

THE BULLETIN

Issue # 3

Third Quarter 2006

On December 20, 2005, The Holy Synod of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East, as the Plaintiffs, filed a complaint in the Superior Court of California, County of Santa Clara, against His Grace Bishop Mar Bawai Soro (whom they have addressed in their court complaint as Ashur Soro). The complaint, filed under case # 105CV054812, is for Injunctive Relief, Accounting, Remedy for Breach of Trust, Constructive Fraud, and Quiet Title. In its order dated February 23, 2006, relating to the Declaration by His Grace Mar Meelis Zaia in support of The Temporary Restraining Order and Preliminary Injunction, the Court found that there was **no evidence** to suggest misappropriation or misuse of any funds and no evidence whatsoever of inappropriate illegal action by His Grace Mar Bawai Soro. The court order read: **“IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that plaintiffs’ application for a mandatory preliminary injunction, as set forth in plaintiffs’ moving papers, is denied.”**

The next step in this legal process will be the trial. The court has not yet established a date for the trial. This legal process may however last for years, and at a tremendous cost to both sides. We are confident in God that at the end, however, the Assyrian world will see that His Grace Mar Bawai will be vindicated and exonerated from all these charges against him, alleged by the leadership of the very church he served for more than 20 years.

MAR MEELIS’ TESTIMONY

At the Preliminary hearings that took place in the Superior Court on January 30, 31 and February 1, 2006, His Grace Mar Meelis took the witness stand for the plaintiffs. During his testimony, Mar Meelis confirmed and established the fact that **“Canon Law”** is the highest and final governing authority within the Church of the East. When cross-examined by the defense attorney as to whether His Grace Mar Bawai committed heresy, Mar Meelis responded **“NO”**, when asked if Mar Bawai committed a crime, Mar Meelis responded **“NO”**, and when asked if Mar Bawai committed an act of immorality, Mar Meelis responded **“NO”**. The lawyer then asked what the reason was for Mar Bawai’s suspension. Mar Meelis’s response was that Mar Bawai disobeyed the Patriarch. The lawyer then asked Mar Meelis “Is a Bishop required to be obedient to the Patriarch at the expense of breach of Canon Law?” Mar Meelis responded, “I can’t answer that”

THE SUPPORT

There is no basis for the case against Mar Bawai. Church members and the Assyrian people do not accept lies, injustice and cruelty imposed upon their brothers. This is one of

the reasons why there is so much support for His Grace Mar Bawai Soro and why the donations for his defense keep on pouring in from supporters everywhere.

There are other reasons why support for Mar Bawai continues to grow. We do not want our Church leaders to be street smart merchants and traders. We do not want our Church leaders to be cunning. We want our church leaders to be pure, clean, and innocent. When they preach the gospel to us, we want them to touch our minds, our hearts, and our souls, to shake us, to move us and fill us with spirituality and the Holy Spirit. The only one who can do this is Mar Bawai, and that is why we support him. But the primary reason for this support is because the majority of Church members and Assyrian people believe in what Mar Bawai stands for and in his vision for the future of our church.

THE APPEAL

Now is a time when a large number of our people are living in dire conditions throughout the Middle East. Yet, The Holy Synod of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East chooses to utilize their resources to sue one of their own bishops, knowing full well in advance, how much pain, suffering and expenses their action will cause to Church members and to Assyrian people worldwide. Costs involved in the litigation could exceed one million dollars for each side. Assyrian money is being paid by Assyrian Bishops to non-Assyrians for non-religious purposes so that they can take legal action against another Assyrian Bishop! The question that presents itself is this: What happened to the Christian values and to the teachings of our lord Jesus Christ? Would not those who preach the gospel and try to instill in us The Word of God and Christian principles be better off practicing what they preach and resolving their issue in a brotherly loving Christian way? How do they feel spending millions of dollars to pay lawyers when our Assyrian people are suffering and in desperate need for help? Mar Bawai has been forced by this action to defend himself against their fraudulent accusations. He did not choose to be involved in this litigation. We are confident that in the end the truth will prevail.

We are very thankful for the financial help and appreciate this gesture of love shown by so many of our people. More funds are needed to continue the forthcoming court proceedings. We appeal to the public to send their **donations** to:

Mar Bawai Support Fund
1714 Franklin St. #100-185
Oakland, CA 94612-3409

Donations to
“Mar Bawai Support Fund”
are NOT tax-exempt.

But, as always, you are also encouraged to send your generous donations to:

Mar Yosip Cathedral
680 Minnesota Avenue
San Jose, CA 95125

Donations to
“Assyrian Church of the East”
ARE tax-exempt.

You can also make donations through PayPal (www.marbawai.com/donate)

MAR BAWAI'S VISION & MISSION

Amongst Church members and our Assyrian people, there exists a great deal of dissatisfaction with the way the Assyrian Church of the East Hierarchy has been operating. Further, there is anger, resentment and outrage over the recent un-canonical, unjust and prejudicial decision that the Synod made suspending His grace Mar Bawai Soro. The following presents a synopsis of Mar Bawai's *Vision* and *Mission*:

THE VISION

1. Our people know the **Word of God**, as revealed in the Sacred Scripture and the Sacred Tradition so that they obtain eternal salvation in Jesus Christ.
2. Our people live in fidelity to our Eastern Christian tradition, never abandon the Church of the East but on the contrary preserve what was received from our forefathers, namely, our Apostolic Faith, holy liturgy, theological expression and sacred canons.
3. Our ultimate goal is to promote **Christian unity** among all of our Churches (Assyrian and Chaldean) so that our people are made People of God who have united the Church of God.
4. We believe if our churches are united, our nation (the Assyrian, Chaldean and Syriac people) will eventually be united, as well. Today's meaningless walls of division weaken us and destroy our Mesopotamian cultural identity and Aramaic Language. Without unity we cannot survive into the next generations.
5. Unity is our ultimate vision for a brighter future.

THE MISSION

1. To call for a new evangelization amongst all of our churches and renew our Christian faith everywhere.
2. To reform and renew Church liturgy by adopting a language relevant to the modern cultural context but in keeping with our faith and Church tradition.
3. To share God's blessings in our lives with all people, especially needy Assyrians around the world; and
4. A sound commitment to preserve our cultural identity within the folds of our current and future generations; and
5. To promote unity among the various segments of our nation (Assyrians, Chaldeans & Syriacs) and among our various churches (Assyrian and Chaldean).