

48<sup>th</sup> Annual Diocesan Assembly  
October 5-7, 2009  
Kansas City, KS  
Orthodox Church in America  
Diocese of the Midwest  
Report of the Chancellor

Your Eminence, Very Reverend and Reverend Fathers, Venerable Deacons My Dear Brothers and Sisters the Faithful of the Diocese of the Midwest;

My report will be brief this year. My duties, as I have stated in the past, are to assist our Diocesan Hierarchy in any way possible in the administration of our Diocese. I continue, as I have in the past, to try to make his life a bit simpler wherever and whenever I am able. For the most part things are on an even keel in the Diocese. That's not to say that everything is perfect and fine but simply on an even keel.

Some of parishes are doing very well and are able to develop strong lay ministry in parish community. These parishes have a strong mission zeal that, by God's Grace, adds faithful to their numbers regularly. I believe this happens because they are not looking for numerical growth but looking to bring the Good News to as many as possible. Others, however, seem to plod along with little or no mission vision or spirit. As I stated in my report last year, "ALL of our parishes need to be in Mission and Evangelization mode." We are trying our best to provide tools for parishes to help them achieve a sense of mission and outreach. The parishes, however, must provide the impetus to make it happen.

At the last Diocesan Assembly we were concerned about the direction of our OCA and how we could affect that direction. The events of the AAC in Pittsburgh were completely unpredictable. As a result we have a new Metropolitan. It seems, though, that we still have much to "iron out" in the national Church. I know that we may have our concerns regarding this but I will not continue in this vein since I believe that our job, here, is to deal with the Church in our Diocese. I am hopeful that we can take care of our Diocesan business and, if needed, discuss our role in the national Church affairs.

The past "crisis" in the OCA has caused much damage to the morale and spirit of our Church. We have witnessed an increase in parochialism in many of our parishes and our parish priests. This has caused us, in some cases, to display the very same behavior that has caused us so much grief. That behavior is the absence or rejection of accountability, accountability to our Hierarchy and the persons representing him, whether Chancellor, Dean, Parish Development/Mission Coordinator, etc. We are accountable to one another. We know that, in the not so far future, we will be seeking a new Archpastor for our Diocese. What will he find?

With this in mind, His Eminence has decided that we will be conducting a total "inventory" of the Parish Life of our Diocese. The questionnaire will be prepared and

distributed to the Rectors and Parish Councils of our Diocesan Parishes. It has not been decided whether it will be electronic or hard copy. Some of the items to be addressed in the questionnaire will be: Clergy Compensation and Benefits, Christian Education, Evangelism and Outreach, and much more. Every parish is expected to fully cooperate and honestly respond. The Chancellor and the Deans will be following up on the process. It is our hope to have this completed and ready to present to the Diocesan Council at their spring meeting. These reports will be made ready and available for our new Hierarch upon his arrival.

At the last Diocesan Assembly a resolution was moved by Fr. Ted Bobosh and seconded by Fr. Christopher Wojcik and passed that "the Diocesan Assembly direct the Diocesan Council to begin the search process for Episcopal candidates". The Diocesan Council did not act on this at its meetings of the past year. This was primarily because we ran out of time at our meetings. Secondly, after discussion with His Eminence, it is felt that we should wait until he has officially announced his intent to retire to the Holy Synod before we begin any procedure. We have heard consistently from His Eminence that he intends to retire but no official announcement has been made. Thirdly, it appears at the time of my writing this report, that there is a controversy regarding the selection of Episcopal candidates at this time in the Synod and the Metropolitan Council. It is felt that we should wait for the outcome of this current issue. Therefore, we have not moved on that direction from last years Assembly. To be sure, the Diocesan Council will begin the process a soon as it is appropriate.

All of our parishes have and are experiencing the collateral damage of the recent and current financial situation. The Finance Committee, with this in mind, worked diligently to prepare a proposed budget that would provide at least some relief to the parishes. For the past two years, as provided for by a decision of the 46<sup>th</sup> Diocesan Assembly in Cleveland in 2007, a \$10 premium assessment was in effect above the regular \$86 per capita assessment for the Diocese. This \$10 premium is scheduled to end at the end of 2009. The Finance committee is NOT seeking the permanent addition of this to the regular assessment. Therefore, if the proposed budget is passed, it will discontinue for 2010.

At a past Diocesan Assembly, many years ago, it was moved and passed that the annual assessment of the Diocese would be increased by the COLA percentage and rounded up to the nearest dollar. The Finance Committee has proposed that no increase be made this year only. This is commensurate with Social Security who is not issuing a COLA increase this year.

This also affects our parishes since the mandatory cost of living adjustment for Parish Priests is equal to the Social Security increase announced every October or November, (although parish are welcome to make an increase if they so desire).

The bottom line result of this is that the proposed Diocesan Assessment for 2010 will be \$86 per capita.

His Eminence has reviewed the proposed budget line by line and has given his blessing for their presentation.

As in the past, I am grateful to His Eminence Archbishop JOB for his confidence in me, to the venerable Deans of our Diocese for their advice and support: To Protodeacon Joseph Matusiak the Archbishop's Aide. To Fr. Luke Nelson our bookkeeper and Rob Koncel the Diocesan Treasurer along with our finance committee, John Sedor and Sam D'Fantis. To our entire Diocesan Council. To our Audit committee, who hold the diocesan administration and me accountable. To Fr. John Baker our property manager who sees to the timely maintenance of the Lasalle property. Most of all, I express my love and appreciation to my wife Cindy, who endures my countless hours on the phone and my frequent absence.

As I stated above, may our Good and Loving God bless all of us to faithfully and without fail, accomplish the work of His Holy Church here in the Diocese of the Midwest.

Asking your holy prayers, respectfully submitted.

Archpriest John Zdinak  
Diocesan Chancellor