

DIocese OF THE MIDWEST • ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

MINUTES • DIOCESAN COUNCIL MEETING • WEDNESDAY, 15 JUNE 2005

I. OPENING PRAYER AND CALL TO ORDER.

His Eminence, Archbishop Job of Chicago opened the meeting with prayer at 10:26 a.m.

Members present: Archbishop Job, Fr. John Adamcio, Fr. Vladimir Berzonsky, Fr. Michael Matsko, Fr. Andrew Clements, Mr. Robert Koncel, Mrs. Mary Jane Lucak, Mr. John Sedor, Fr. Basil Stoyka, Dr. Richard West, Fr. John Zdinak, chancellor, and Hegumen Vladimir (Wendling), in place of diocesan secretary Fr. John Matusiak.

Deans present: Fr. Thomas Mueller, Fr. Peter Pawlack, Fr. Daniel Rentel, Fr. Thaddeus Wojcik, and Fr. Andrew Yavornitzky.

Guest: Mr. Joseph Kormos.

II. READINGS FROM SCRIPTURE

The day's scripture readings were read and discussed.

III. MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of 19 January 2004 were accepted upon motion by Mr. Sedor, seconded by Fr. Adamcio.

IV. REPORTS.

A. Diocesan Hierarchy.

Archbishop Job reported on the following.

1. His participation in annual March for Life in Washington, DC, in January 2005. A group from the Chicago area also participated.
2. The success of the diocesan fellowship dinners in Chicago and Minneapolis for the benefit of diocesan seminarians. He stated the need to disclose the proceeds from these dinners and their disbursement.
3. His participation in the meetings of the Lesser Synod of Bishops
4. His pleasure with the clergy convocation in February 2005, which was very well attended.
5. The installation of new officers for Orthodox Christians for Life Chicago.
6. The installation of Fr. John Baker as dean of Christ the Savior Church, Chicago.
7. The successful diocesan fellowship dinner in Minneapolis for the benefit of diocesan seminarians.
8. The blessing of the newly purchased Saint Elizabeth the New Martyr Church, Chesterton, IN, in time for Pascha.
9. His last visit with the late Fr. John Platko and the funeral and burial services.
10. The ordination of Deacon Thaddeus Nielsen to the Holy Priesthood.
11. His visits to parishes in eastern Ohio during the weekend of Orthodoxy Sunday.
12. The repose of his mother and his subsequent absence from the spring session of the Holy Synod of Bishops.
13. The celebration of Holy Week and Pascha at Holy Trinity Cathedral.
14. A private meeting he had with His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, to discuss various concerns.
15. The consecration of the newly built Holy Resurrection Church, Palatine, IL.
16. The 100th anniversary Memorial Day pilgrimage to Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery, and the special session of the Holy Synod of Bishops, during which His Grace, Bishop Tikhon of South Canaan was elected ruling Bishop of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania.
17. His annual visit to Holy Ascension Church, Albion, MI, on the Great Feast of the Ascension. He noted that this event is becoming something of a pilgrimage for members of several other diocesan parishes.
18. The annual quad-parish Liturgy and picnic for parishes in Chicago's southwest suburbs.
19. The move of Protodeacon Alexis Washington of Holy Trinity Cathedral, Chicago, to Phoenix, AZ.
20. The impending ordinations of Deacons Zachariah Trent and Philip Lashbrook to the Holy Priesthood.
21. Fr. Paul Gassios of Saint Thomas Church, Kokomo, IN, will be entering Saint Gregory Palamas Monastery, Haysville, OH.
22. Plans for visiting several diocesan summer camps.
23. His recent move from the third to the second floor of the diocesan residence.

B. Chancellor's Report.

Fr. Zdinak reported on a number of issues.

1. According to plan, the St. Louis Deanery was dissolved on 1 June 2005, at which time the Kansas City Deanery was established. The chancellor is serving as acting dean until August 2005, when Archbishop Job will meet with the deanery clergy and appoint a new dean. There has been a lot of activity in the Kansas City area in the last few months. The final illness and repose of Fr. John Platko were very trying for the members of Holy Trinity Church, Overland Park, KS, but things are going well under the leadership of Fr. Timothy Sawchak. It was noted that the diocese intervened directly in the transition to new leadership in that parish only at the specific request of Fr. Platko and the parish council.
2. Saint Theodore of Tarsus parish in Independence, MO, will be closed. The Diocese will assume ownership of and responsibilities for the property, which ultimately will be sold. The antimension and Holy Chrism have already been

removed from the temple, and arrangements are being made for the transfer of other sacred items to appropriate places. There was some discussion among diocesan council members concerning the disbursement of proceeds from the sale of the property. It was felt that it would be best to use the monies in the area of missions.

3. Due to the many necessary trips to the Kansas City area, the chancellor's travel expenses were higher than usual.
4. Archangel Michael Church, St. Louis, MO, is in serious financial crisis, and it is likely that the priest will be transferred elsewhere.
5. The new mission in Omaha, NE, is doing well and is awaiting assignment of a priest.
6. A priest will be assigned to Saint Raphael Mission, Quincy, IL, but he temporarily will need to engage in outside employment.
7. The position of Fr. John Baker with regard to the diocese and Christ the Savior Church, Chicago, was clarified. Fr. Baker has been named diocesan center property manager. This has already proved to be a valuable decision, given the importance of ongoing repairs and maintenance. In exchange for his work as property manager, the diocese provides housing for Fr. Baker and his family on the third floor of the residence. He also helps Archbishop Job with the preparation for travel and visitations. In this capacity he receives a small stipend from the diocese. Both of these are separate from any compensation he receives from Christ the Savior parish, and are taken from the budgeted monies for the position of full-time deacon/driver for the Archbishop, a position that has yet to be filled.
8. Since there is no full-time deacon for Archbishop Job, diaconal services for archpastoral visits will be provided regionally by deacons who will be trained for this service. They will receive a stipend when called upon to fulfill these duties. Training will begin in the fall.
9. We are looking into different venues for the annual clergy convocation, as we are outgrowing the Carmelite retreat Center, Darien, IL, where the convocation has been held for years.
10. A review of diocesan clergy compensation, medical insurance, and related issues will be conducted in the near future.

C. Deans' Reports.

Written reports from the Chicago, Cleveland, Columbus, Michigan, Minneapolis, and St. Louis deaneries were distributed and read, with no additions.

D. Metropolitan Council Representatives' Report.

Dr. West and Fr. Berzonsky reported the work of the Metropolitan Council. Dr. West noted financial concerns on the national level, after which a discussion was held on full participation in the "fair share" by the "non-territorial dioceses." A discussion was also held about the seating of auxiliary bishops on the Holy Synod.

E. Diocesan Department Reports.

1. *Communications.* Discussion focused on the diocesan web site. A new design and management is being sought, and procedures for eliciting information and photos from parishes are being considered. When the web site is operating according to plan, *The Vigil* will need to be reviewed, so that it is not merely a "hard copy" version of the web site.
2. *Mission Department.* The mission review committee noted that work is progressing positively, and that a meeting of the committee will be held tomorrow.
3. *Late Vocations.* Under the direction of Fr. Michael Butler, the late vocations program is going well, especially with regard to ensuring that the diocesan program meets the OCA's expectations and requirements.

V. TREASURER'S REPORT.

Mr. Koncel, diocesan treasurer, presented a written report and offered appropriate commentary. He noted that the census figure of 6,354 would be adjusted to 6,211. There was some discussion on parishes that are in arrears with regard to their "fair share" assessments and about the possibility of their not being seated at the All-American Council and diocesan assembly.

VI. NEW BUSINESS.

- A. Discussion on the 14th All-American Council.** Discussion focused on an anticipated request for an increase in the "fair share" assessments. Upon motion by Fr. Adamcio, seconded by Fr. Clements, it was unanimously decided to send a letter to the chancellor of the Orthodox Church in America requesting disclosure of budgeted and actual figures for the years 2003, 2004, and 2005, and the projected figures for 2006.
- B. Diocesan Assembly.** In light of the fact that this year's assembly will be held in conjunction with the All-American Council, its agenda will be simple. The Archbishop, chancellor, and deans will present their reports, a half-year financial report will be given, and the cost-of-living increase in the diocesan assessment (included in the assessment passed at the 2004 assembly) will be enacted. Mrs. Lucak will coordinate a social hour for assembly participants.
- C. "Idea Discussion."** A discussion on how to utilize the surplus funds accrued due to the lack of a full-time deacon/driver was held. Many ideas were considered, but no decisions were reached.

VII. ADJOURNMENT AND CLOSING PRAYER.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m. upon motion by Mr. Sedor, seconded by Fr. Berzonsky, with the singing of the Hymn to the Theotokos.

Respectfully submitted 17 June 2005/ *Hegumen Vladimir [Wendling]*
in place of Father John Matusiak, Diocesan Secretary