

MINUTES
MEETING OF THE DIOCESAN COUNCIL OF THE DIOCESE OF THE
MIDWEST
14 May 2009
Chicago, Illinois

I. OPENING

The regular meeting of the Diocesan Council of the Diocese of the Midwest was opened with the singing of “Christ is Risen” led by His Eminence, Archbishop Job of Chicago and the Midwest at 10:27 a.m.

A. ROLL CALL

1. **Members Present in addition to Archbishop Job:** The V. Rev. John Adamcio, the V. Rev. Andrew Clements, Mrs. Alexa Geeza, the Rev. Mark Hodges Mr. Robert Koncel, treasurer, Mrs. Mary Jane Lucak, Ms. Kitty Mabus, the V. Rev. Michael Matsko, Mr. John Sedor (alternate), Mr. Mark Stokoe, the V. Rev. Basil Stoyka, and the V. Rev. John Zdinak, chancellor.
2. **Deans Present:** The Rev. Joseph Gibson, the V. Rev. Thomas Mueller, the V. Rev. Timothy Sawchak, the V. Rev. Paul Wesche, and the V. Rev. Andrew Yavornitzky.
3. **Others Present:** Mr. Joseph Kormos, Protoeakon Joseph Matusiak.

B. MINUTES of the meeting of 28 January 2009 were accepted upon motion by Father Adamcio, seconded by Mrs. Lucak.

C. SCRIPTURE READINGS. The daily readings were read.

II. ARCHBISHOP’S REPORT.

Archbishop Job apologized for missing the meetings held the past two days as he was in Dallas, where the Holy Synod of Bishops was honoring His Eminence, Archbishop Dmitri, who had retired recently.

Since the beginning of February 2009

- A. he participated in the installation of His Grace, Bishop Daniel of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA in Chicago.
- B. he attended the diocesan clergy convocation, which energized him. Attendance was excellent.
- C. he served as “supply priest” at Detroit’s Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral.
- D. he met with His Grace, Bishop Mark of the Antiochian Diocese of Toledo, to discuss mutual concerns.
- E. he very much appreciated the Holy Synod retreat in Colorado Springs, which enhanced unity among the hierarchs.
- F. he noted that Great Lent, Holy Week and Pascha were spiritually rewarding, the first “normal” season in four years.
- G. he attended Chicago’s Orthodoxy Sunday celebration along with seven other bishops.
- H. he met with Bishop Lauren Shaver of a Merrillville, IN-based Anglican group exploring Orthodox Christianity. In July, he, together with Metropolitan Jonah, will meet with Bishop Shaver.

- I. he visited eight parishes in March, in addition to attending Lesser Synod and Holy Synod meetings.
- J. he performed a number of ordination, including those of Deacon Ken Kornafel [Saints Peter and Paul, Burr Ridge]; Deacon Lawrence Dugoni [Saint Joseph's, Wheaton]; Priest John Jones [Saints Cyril and Methodius, Milwaukee].
- K. he visited Saint Joseph Church, Wheaton, IL, for the celebration of the parish's 20th anniversary.
- L. he, together with Metropolitan Jonah, participated in the 100th anniversary of the repose of Saint Alexis Toth at Saint Mary Cathedral, Minneapolis, where the Metropolitan delivered a lecture on the missionary legacy of Saint Alexis.
- M. he reported that, in the coming months, he will attend the annual pilgrimage to Saint Tikhon Monastery, visit four diocesan camps, celebrate two additional ordinations, participate in the consecration of Bishop-Elect Melchisedek [Pleska] as ruling hierarch of the Diocese of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania, host a visit of Metropolitan Jonah [a Chicago native], etc.
- Topics discussed in response to Archbishop Job's report included a variety of issues that had recently arisen in North American and World Orthodoxy, Metropolitan Jonah's upcoming visit to Russia, ongoing lawsuits against the OCA, the situation at Saint Tikhon's Monastery and Seminary, OCA financial concerns and conservation, and positive trends within the Holy Synod.

III. CHANCELLOR'S REPORT.

Father John Zdinak highlighted the following in his report.

- A. With regard to the finance committee, the new bookkeeping system hopefully will be in place by the end of June, with the goal of sending monthly reports to members of the Diocesan Council and posting said reports on the diocesan web site.
- B. The proposed 2010 will be sent to all Diocesan Council members before the Assembly; comments in advance of the Assembly are welcome.
- C. The \$10.00 per member per year special assessment for the Parish Health ministry will be discontinued in 2010. Hopefully assessments will be reduced by a further \$5.00 per member in 2010.

He also spoke about concerns with regard to diocesan auditors.

IV. DEANERY REPORTS.

- A. **Chicago Deanery.** In addition to his written report, Father Thomas Mueller noted that the deanery camp attendance was nearly double that of 2008, with 50 participants; the Rev. Herman Kincaid was installed as rector of Saints Peter and Paul Church, Burr Ridge; a mission community, Holy Theophany Chapel, now exists in Lake Geneva, WI as an outreach of Saints Cyril and Methodius Church, Milwaukee; Lenten Mission Vespers were well attended with weekly talks on the theme of "The Good Shepherd;" and that Archbishop Job is no longer rector of Christ the Saviour Church, Chicago.
- B, **Cleveland Deanery.** In addition to his written report, Father John Steffaro noted that a letter sent to Metropolitan Jonah by deanery clergy expressing the need for communication and collaborative decisionmaking was not answered; Lenten retreats were successful; a priest is being sought for Holy Assumption Church, Canton, OH; ninety boys participated in the deanery altar server rally; and that plans for a youth retreat

were underway.

C. Columbus Deanery. In addition to his written report, Father Joseph Gibson noted that the camp in Indianapolis had 50 participants; five of the deanery's 13 priests were dealing with health issues; deanery clergy remain "skeptical" of the national Church; the economy is taking a toll; and that there are a number of catechumens throughout the deanery.

D. Kansas City Deanery. In addition to his written report, Father Timothy Sawchak noted that three more cells have been added at Presentation Monastery, Marshfield, MO, and that planning for the 2009 Diocesan Assembly in Kansas City is well underway.

E. Michigan Deanery. In addition to his written report, Father Andrew Yavornitzky spoke of the situation at Detroit's Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral.

F. Minneapolis Deanery. Father Paul Wesche had nothing to add to his written report.

V. METROPOLITAN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES' REPORT.

Mark Stokoe gave a comprehensive report on a variety of Metropolitan Council matters. The first meeting of the internal auditors will be held May 23 in Dayton, OH. The external auditing firm was terminated by Metropolitan Jonah and the Very Rev. Alexander Garklavs, OCA Chancellor, with no explanation, which has led Metropolitan Council members to question whether they had the authority to do this. With regard to the case of the former Chancellor, Mr. Stoke reported that with regard to the \$25 million lawsuit against the OCA, the judge agreed to consolidate matters, giving the OCA the ability to go into Chase accounts, which is a positive. He also spoke of other lawsuits. With regard to strategic planning, Mr. Stokoe reported that Metropolitan Jonah wants as many Metropolitan Council members as possible to attend the summer conference at Saint Vladimir's Seminary. In the area of finances, the Very Rev. Matthew Tate, Milwaukie, OR, heads the finance committee and is doing an excellent job. The enthronement of Metropolitan Jonah was very costly, and spending must be closely tracked. Assessment income is behind and late from all dioceses, which creates further problems.

It was decided by consensus that Father Michael Matsko and Mr. Stokoe will be sent to the summer conference at Saint Vladimir's Seminary upon motion by Father Matusiak, seconded by Kitty Mabus.

In response to questions, it was noted that a new treasurer to replace the Rev. Michael Tassos, Treasurer, will be sought. The Very Rev. Dennis Swencki also works part-time in the treasurer's office on a per-hour basis.

VI. PARISH HEALTH FACILITATOR'S REPORT.

Following lunch, Mr. Joseph Kormos opened a presentation/discussion on the Parish Health Ministry. He noted that, in the area of mission grants, All Saints Church, Columbus, OH, is being reinstated. A few mission grants have been given, including \$1,000.00 to the mission in Hyde Park, Chicago for pastoral support. Other requests are tentative. Mr. Kormos opined that the Diocese needs to continue the Parish Health Ministry, as it is only in its beginning stages. He expects the deans to promote the Ministry, to provide parish e-mail lists, and promote the use of the Parish Health Inventory. He elaborated on the Parish Health Inventory model, explaining how it is used in the workshops he had done. He reported on the webinar with the Rev. Basil

Aden, rector of Christ the Saviour Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Church, Rockford, IL. He also spoke about parish health grants, the upcoming urban parish seminar in Cleveland, and the need for a youth leaders' summit.

VII. TREASURER'S REPORT.

Mr. Robert Koncel distributed the current budget, with few changes. He noted that there is a \$40,000.00 deficit as a result of parishes that have not remitted their payments. In the discussion that followed, it was clear that something must be done, and it was proposed that when a parish is two months in arrears, a letter should be sent to the rector and parish council, together with a financial statement, calling this to their attention. Beyond this, nothing concrete was decided with regard to collecting unpaid assessments. Further discussion centered on recommendations from the finance committee, but the fact remains that when the Diocese has to remit a parish's OCA assessments to the OCA Chancery but is not sending their assessments to the Diocese, the Diocese loses in a major, and debilitating, way. Mr. Koncel reported that the budget is based on a projected membership of 5,250 adults. Ways to economize were discussed, including reducing expenses paid by the Diocese that properly belong to Christ the Saviour Church, Chicago; eliminating the position of Late Vocations Director; reducing the number of and expenses for meetings and receptions; cutting the employee assistance program; etc. It was decided by consensus that the position of Late Vocations Director be eliminated upon motion by Father Basil Stoyka, seconded by Mr. Koncel. Father Hodges spoke at length on the need to adopt tithing as the norm.

VIII. NEXT MEETING.

The next meeting of the Diocesan Council will be held on Monday, 5 October 2009 on the eve of the Diocesan Assembly.

X. ADJOURNMENT.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned with the singing of the Paschal Hymn to the Theotokos at 3:46 p.m. upon motion by Father Basil Stoyka, seconded by Mrs. Mary Jane Lucak.

Father John Matusiak, Secretary, with the assistance of Mrs. Alexa Geeza

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