

MEETING OF THE MIDWEST DIOCESAN COUNCIL

Tuesday and Wednesday, 8 and 9 June 2010

Chicago, Illinois

I. OPENING.

The meeting opened at 10:08 a.m. on Tuesday, 8 June 2010 with the Prayer to the Holy Spirit led by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah, after which the chair was turned over to the Very Rev. John Zdinak, Chancellor.

II. PRESENT: The Very Revs. John Adamcio, Andrew Clements, Michael Matsko, John Matusiak, Secretary, Thomas Mueller, Timothy Sawchak, John Steffaro, Basil Stoyka, Paul Wesche, and John Zdinak, Chancellor; the Revs. Joseph Gibson, Mark Hodges, Stephen Hrycyniak, and Christopher Wojcik; and Mr. Sam D'Fantis, Mr. Michael Dorosh, Mrs. Alexa Geeza, Mr. Robert Koncel, Treasurer, Mr. Joseph Kormos, Mrs. Mary Jane Lucak, Mr. John Sedor, and Mr. Mark Stokoe.

III. SCRIPTURE READINGS.

The appointed Scripture readings for the day – Ephesians 5:5-19 and Matthew 18:10-20 – were read.

IV. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved as presented upon motion by Mrs. Lucak, seconded by Fr. Hrycyniak.

V. REPORT OF THE LOCUM TENENS.

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah, reported on a number of matters. In brief...

A. With regard to the diocese, Metropolitan Jonah noted that there is a great deal of positive activity in the Diocese. He has been primarily involved with clergy matters and disciplinary issues. The diocesan chancery is running well.

B. Metropolitan Jonah spoke at length about the recent North American Episcopal Assembly, noting that the most important aspect of the gathering was that 56 of the continent's 67 bishops came together to talk and discuss common concerns. While there was a strong sense among some hierarchs that the future of Orthodoxy in America lies with the Ecumenical Patriarchate, others maintained the vision of an autocephalous Church uniting all Orthodox in America. Many committees were established, and an executive committee was named. [The Orthodox Church in America does not have a seat on this body.]

After reviewing a variety of matters leading to the convocation of the Assembly, he concluded by stating that there is a need to develop a sense of the local Church, of working together, of leaving behind everything but the Gospel and everything that divides, of discovering the common story of all Orthodox Christians in America.

C. On the Church-wide level, Metropolitan Jonah offered a number of observations and noted that he is very encouraged. We are producing more seminarians than we have places to put them, which is a good problem, but we need to finance more missions. The Holy Synod has come together as a brotherhood of men who love one another and care about one another and argue with one another in spirit of respect. In this climate, issues can be worked out in a positive manner. He shared his opinion that the Church as grown through process of scandal and has learned lessons that can be applied in the future as we turn to the central matter of bringing the Gospel to America. The Holy Synod has devoted much time to strategic planning, to embracing a vision that is genuinely missionary.

VI. CHANCELLOR'S REPORT.

Father Zdinak reported on a variety of matters.

A. He noted that the day-to-day chancery operations are going well, with good communications between the chancery and his office via phone, e-mail, etc. Metropolitan Jonah blesses all routine administrative work, with good communications as well. He added that Protodeacon Joseph Matusiak's work is "outstanding."

B. He reported the impending retirement of the Very Rev. John Steffaro, dean of the Cleveland Deanery, and the opening of Saint John the Baptist Church, Campbell, OH, of which he served as rector. A number of other retirements are on the horizon.

C. In the case of new parish assignments, deans will negotiate compensation packages, which will then be approved by the diocesan hierarch before assignments are made. No assignments will be made until the proper paperwork and procedures are in place.

D. Expenses for the funeral of His Grace, Archbishop Job were lower than anticipated. The diocese received \$50,000.00 from his life insurance policy, which covered all expenses. He left no will; two cousins are the heirs to his estate. The matter remains in the hands of the family and probate attorneys.

VII. DEANERY REPORTS.

A. **CHICAGO DEANERY.** Fr. Mueller spoke of ongoing ministries, including the deanery higher education program [currently with 10-12 students, only two of whom are contemplating ordination to the diaconate], summer and winter camps [many priests assist], the new Saint Macarios Mission in the Hyde Park section of Chicago, the new chapel in Lake Geneva, WI, the closing of Saint Clement Church, Merrillville, which has fully merged with the Protection of the Mother of God Church, also in Merrillville with merged assets, and various matters concerning deanery clergy on loan to or assisting in Greek parishes.

B. **CLEVELAND DEANERY.** In addition to business and fellowship, meetings now include topical discussions. A deanery youth group is being coordinated by one of the deacons, with some youth from non-OCA parishes participating. Saint Andrew Church, Maple Heights, OH was visited in light of the fact that it is seriously in arrears with regard to assessments. A good faith pledge of \$1,000.00 per month was received. A clergy wives picnic is being scheduled for August. The deanery late vocations program is being revamped and regrouped.

C. **COLUMBUS DEANERY.** Winter and summer camps continue for high school and college students. Metropolitan Jonah visited Saint John Church, Indianapolis, IN. The Very Rev. Ted Bobosh of Saint Paul Church, Dayton, OH, was stricken with appendicitis on Pentecost Sunday, on which the parish's 25th anniversary was being celebrated. The former All Saints Mission, Columbus, OH, which had been closed in 2009, went to the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese, together with the priest and people. The deanery boasts seven students at Saint Tikhon and Saint Vladimir seminaries.

D. **KANSAS CITY DEANERY.** Saint Sophia Mission is considering purchasing a building. It has adopted mission by-laws. The Very Rev. Thomas Succarotte of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary Church, Madison, IL, fell ill on Holy Monday, but is making steady progress.

E. **MINNEAPOLIS DEANERY.** Saint Nicholas Church, Chisholm, MN, remains vacant. Deacon Benjamin Tucci of Saint Mary Cathedral, Minneapolis, was ordained to the priesthood and has been assigned as the cathedral's second priest.

VIII. REPORT OF THE DIOCESAN METROPOLITAN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES.

Father Matsko and Mr. Stokoe highlighted the following.

- A. The Saint Tikhon Monastery investigation report was released. The Holy Synod will take further action.
- B. Metropolitan Council committees are meeting and working well. The Strategic Plan Committee meets regularly, engaging in “real discussions.” A second version of the Strategic Plan will be forthcoming, with the aim of presenting the Plan to the Church early in 2011 in preparation for the 16th All-American Council at the end of that year.
- C. With the settlement of the Kondratick suits with a dismissal of all future claims and the dropping of suits on the part of the former Bishop of Alaska. Currently there are no legal actions.
- D. The Sexual Misconduct Committee met and is working on policies.
- E. Financial, budget, and audit information is being posted on the OCA web site.
- F. Fr. Matsko noted that the Metropolitan Council has been meeting with the members of the Holy Synod, generating a genuine dialogue. He noted that vast improvements have been made during the past two years and that he is amazed by the talents of the Council members, who use their gifts in a variety of areas. This will produce positive results for the Church in the future. The Legal Committee is doing an excellent job and deserves much thanks.
- G. Plans for the 16th All-American Council in November 2011 are well underway. It is anticipated that many faithful from Alaska will be in attendance.

VII. PARISH DEVELOPMENT AND MISSIONS.

Highlights of the report of Father Mueller and Mr. Kormos include the following.

- A. Saint Raphael Mission, Quincey, IL is receiving a mission grant.
- B. Visits have been made to Christ the Savior Mission, Anoka, MN and Saint Macarios Mission, Hyde Park/Chicago, IL, which serves some 35 faithful, half of whom are students. As the first “urban mission” in the diocese, Saint Macarios’ holds promise as outreach on a number of levels to the surrounding community increases.
- C. The Rev. Gregory Grivna oversees the mission in Grand Rapids, MN.
- D. Fr. Mueller reported on the chapel in Lake Geneva, WI, which may not hold promise as a separate parish but fills a serious need for those in the area wishing to worship under the auspices of an established parish, in this instance Saints Cyril and Methodius parish, Milwaukee. He added that older parishes with only a few people could also be designated chapels, as in the case of the chapel in Buckner, IL. Those who worship at chapels are technically members of the sponsoring parishes.
- E. Mr. Kormos spoke about the OCA’s Parish Ministries Conference in Cleveland, with which the Parish Health Ministry is fully engaged. Attendance is anticipated to be 125 – 150 participants. There are some diocesan funds to assist those with needs who wish to attend. He also spoke about the availability of parish development grants for ongoing and new ministries.

VIII. TREASURER’S REPORT.

Mr. Koncel presented his written report, which is appended to these minutes and made a part thereof. He commented on a number of areas.

Mr. D’Fantis noted that there are numerous costly repairs that must be addressed at the Diocesan Center, including air conditioning problems in the rectory, leaking skylights, etc. He added that Christ the Saviour parish, which shares the facility and houses its rector and family therein, should increase its contribution to

offset the cost of maintenance and labor. It was also noted that the new bishop may not wish to reside in the Center.

The Diocesan Council adjourned at 3:47 on Tuesday, 6 June, and reconvened with prayer at 9:10 a.m. on Wednesday, 7 June.

IX. OLD BUSINESS.

A. **INTERIM BUDGET.** With regard to the Finance Committee's proposed budget for the interim period between bishops and the necessary costs for the search process presented by Mr. Koncel in mid-April 2010, after a period of 10 days for discussion, a roll call vote was taken by e-mail to accept the proposed budget. The budget passed unanimously with two abstentions.

B. **DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY AND SPECIAL ELECTION ASSEMBLY.** The annual Assembly will be held 4 – 6 October 2010 in Minneapolis, MN. After the Divine Liturgy at Saint Mary Cathedral, Minneapolis, on Wednesday, 6 October, a special Assembly for the sole purpose of electing a new diocesan bishop will be convened. It was noted that observers may attend the special Assembly without registering. The Liturgy will begin at 7:30 a.m., with the special Assembly slated to open at 11:00 a.m. Adjournment will be at 1:00 p.m. The diocesan Chancellor will chair the special Assembly.

Father Adamcio wished to have recorded his objection to holding the special Assembly at Saint Mary Cathedral due to problems with that parish's assessment payments.

X. CLOSED SESSION.

Following a break for lunch, Diocesan Council members met in closed session, at the conclusion of which it was announced that [in alphabetical order] the Very Rev. Paul Gassios, the Very Rev. David Mahaffey, and the Priestmonk Matthias [Moriak] had been selected as candidates for the vacant diocesan See, pending full vetting by the Holy Synod of Bishops. The candidates will be present at the Clergy Convocation in Darien, IL 23-25 August 2010.

XI. NEW BUSINESS.

A. **PROCESS FOR THE ELECTION OF A NEW DIOCESAN BISHOP.** After much discussion, Father Wojcik, seconded by Father Hrycyniak, motioned to accept the following process.

ON THE FIRST VOTE:

Preprinted ballots will be provided with the names of the three final candidates.

Delegates will vote for one candidate per ballot by checking the square next to the candidate for whom they are voting.

The tellers will collect and tally the ballots.

If a candidate receives a 2/3 majority of the vote, the chair will ask for a motion of acclamation by the Assembly for the majority candidate.

If, however, no candidate receives a 2/3 majority of the vote, the candidate receiving the least number of votes will be removed from the running.

ON THE SECOND VOTE:

A second vote will then be taken with the two final candidates on the ballot.

The Tellers will again collect and tally the ballots.

Following the Tally, the Chair will announce the simple majority winner and ask for a motion of acclamation by the Assembly for the majority candidate.

IN CASE OF A TIE VOTE:

If, in the second vote, the vote is evenly split 50/50, the two names will be submitted to the Holy Synod of Bishops for their decision.

Motion passed unanimously.

B. PRELIMINARY CONSECRATION PLANS.

Father Zdinak recommended that the consecration of the new diocesan bishop take place after Pascha – Friday through Sunday, 13 -- 15 May 2011 -- thereby allowing sufficient time for planning and for the candidate to make appropriate preparations. It was suggested that Friday's election and confession of faith and Saturday's consecration Liturgy be celebrated at Christ the Savior Church, Chicago, rather than Holy Trinity Cathedral, given the latter's limited altar space. A banquet will follow the Saturday Consecration Liturgy. The Saturday evening Vigil and the Sunday installation Liturgy will be celebrated at the cathedral.

A one-day clergy convocation will be held in conjunction with the consecration and installation.

The proposal was unanimously accepted upon motion by Mr. Dorosh, seconded by Mrs. Lucak.

Appointed to the Consecration Committee were Father Adamcio, Mr. Dorosh, Mrs. Geeza, Father Hrycyniak, Mrs. Lucak, and Father Mueller.

XII. NEW BUSINESS.

Mr. D'Fantis motioned, seconded by Father Adamcio, that Mr. Michael Herzak be invited to speak on sexual misconduct issues at the forthcoming Diocesan Assembly, Passed unanimously.

XIII. THE NEXT MEETING will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Monday, 4 October 2010 at the Diocesan Assembly in Minneapolis.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned upon motion by Mr. Kormos, seconded by Father Wojcik, at 11:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Father John Matusiak, Diocesan Secretary

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