

MEETING OF THE DIOCESAN COUNCIL OF THE DIOCESE OF THE MIDWEST

Chicago, Illinois • 2 December 2016

I. OPENING.

The meeting, convened at the Holiday Inn Midway, opened with the singing of “O Heavenly King” led by His Grace, Bishop Paul, at 10:02 a.m.

II. ATTENDANCE.

Present were Bishop Paul; Archpriest John Zdinak, Diocesan Chancellor; Archpriest John Matusiak, Secretary; Mr. Robert Koncel, Treasurer; Archpriest John Adamcio; Archpriest James Dank; Archpriest Alexander Garklavs, Archpriest Alexander Kuchta, Archpriest Elijah Mueller; Priest Nicholas Finley, Mr. Dennis Garlick; Ms. Ellyn Gillette; Mr. Barry Gluntz; Mr. Robert Graban; Mr. Simeon Morbey; and Mrs. Daria Petrykowski. Also present from the Bishop’s Council were Archpriests Andrew Clements, Thomas Mueller, Timothy Sawchak, Paul Wesche and Andrew Yavornitzky; and Mr. Philip Sokolov, Bishop’s Secretary.

III. SCRIPTURE READINGS.

Mr. Morbey read the day’s selection from the Epistles – Thessalonians 5:9-13; 24-28 – while Father Dank read the day’s Gospel reading – Luke 20:19-26.

IV. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING.

The minutes of the October 2016 meeting were accepted as presented upon motion by Mr. Garlick, seconded by Father Adamcio.

V. REPORT OF BISHOP PAUL.

Bishop Paul opened his report by noting that he will soon mark his second year in the episcopacy and that he is in the process of making second visits to most parishes. He thanked everyone for their prayers during his recent brief hospitalization.

He expressed his pleasure with regard to the coverage of the “Motorbikes for Kenya” drive as presented on the diocesan web site. Thirty bikes were purchased for the Kenyan clergy in partnership with the Orthodox Christian Mission Center. He expressed his deep gratitude to all who made this drive such a success.

With regard to Phase Three of the Sexual Misconduct regulations, he noted that yearly compliance reports are required. Bishop Paul then opened a discussion on the family as the “little Church” and the need to help equip families in accomplishing this, especially those with children attending public schools. He stressed the importance of equipping families to maintain a life of prayer and piety at home and discussed the need to provide resources to this end. He added that he hopes to send out an encyclical on the subject in February or March 2017. A variety of suggestions were shared by Council members with regard to the most effective way to address this matter. Father Matusiak and Mrs. Petrykowski will work with Bishop Paul to develop a series of “digestible” messages.

With regard to parishes in arrears in their assessment payments, Bishop Paul reported that arrangements have been made with all affected parishes. The situations of two additional parishes are being further reviewed.

Finally, Bishop Paul noted that the 19th All-American Council will be convened in our diocese – in Saint Louis – in July 2018. Assistance in its planning will be sought locally as well as across the diocese. Father Sawchak and Mr. Robert Butchko are serving as local co-chairs of the AAC.

VI. CHANCELLOR’S REPORT.

Father Zdinak provided a detailed report on the ongoing dialogue with the faithful of Chicago’s Christ the Savior Church. He noted that on October 1, 2016, a letter had been received from Archpriest John Baker offering several clarifications. In it, he reported that the iconography project was being pursued in obedience to a directive from the late Archbishop Job and that the parish had expended \$155,000.00 addressing a variety of maintenance projects. Acknowledging that Christ the Savior parish is a vibrant community liturgically and with regard to ministering to the poor, Father Baker reported that the parish had been asked if they could commit to \$15,000.00 per year if the diocese were to take an additional \$200,000.00 to pursue further repairs and ultimately reduce unnecessary expenses. Mr. Morbey will ensure that a formal understanding of the relationship between the parish and the diocese is drafted.

Father Zdinak reported that the Diocesan By-Laws are in need of revision and updating, especially since the updating of parish by-laws has been completed. The task force appointed to address the uniform parish by-laws will be called upon to oversee this project. He added that the Clergy Compensation Guidelines also need to be updated.

In related matters, Father Zdinak reported that the diocese’s financial books are being converted to the model employed by the Diocese of the West with the help of that diocese’s treasurer, Ms. Mary Caetta. He added that a redesign of the diocesan web site is also being considered.

VII. TREASURER’S REPORT.

Mr. Koncel reported that at present, the diocese is operating at a deficit of about \$58,000.00, but clarified that this is before withdrawing any funds from the escrow account. Mr. Morbey suggested that the Finance Committee draw up a written investment strategy that would be acceptable to the Diocesan Council. Mr. Koncel recognized Polly Walker for her invaluable service as diocesan accountant since 2008, with Father Zdinak adding that a search for her replacement is underway. The Treasurer’s Report as presented by Mr. Koncel and seconded by Father Finley, was accepted as presented.

VIII. DEANERY REPORTS.

- A. Chicago Deanery.** Father Thomas Mueller added that a candidate is being sought for Saint Nicholas Church, Joliet, IL; that Priest Eugene Wozniak has been appointed to Saint Matthew Church, Green Bay, WI; and that Archpriest Joseph Kopka had been hospitalized with pancreatitis.
- B. Cleveland Deanery.** Father Clements added that Archpriest Emilian Hutnyan had been awarded the jeweled cross; that his wife, Matushka Laryssa Hutnyan, continues to battle ovarian cancer; and that after an extended illness, Archpriest Yves Babich has returned to full duties in his secular work and parish ministry.
- C. Indianapolis Deanery.** No report.
- D. Kansas City Deanery.** Father Sawchak added that Archpriest Moses Berry is doing well after undergoing a kidney transplant; that Archpriest John Pawelchak, father-in-law of Father Finley, has relocated to southern Illinois in retirement and will be assisting at Saint Raphael Mission, Quincy, IL; and that Holy Trinity Church, Overland Park, KS will be celebrating its 100th anniversary in the coming year.
- E. Michigan Deanery.** Father Yavornitzky added that ongoing efforts at Detroit's Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral are focused on engaging committed missionaries to expand its neighborhood outreach.
- F. Minneapolis Deanery.** Father Wesche added that Saint Peter Church, Minot, ND is awaiting an assigned pastor, while Priest Herman Klarr is being assigned to Lublin, WI and Priest William Rittig has been assigned to Fargo, ND. He further noted that details with regard to the non-profit organization responsible for the former church in Chisholm, MN is nearing completion.

IX. PARISH DEVELOPMENT/MISSIONS.

Father Thomas Mueller reported that for the third year, grants have been given to mission clergy. He added that Parish Health Grants had not been made available this year since the diocese is once again paying Mr. Joseph Kormos for his services. The diocese has sent two clergy and two laypersons to the OCA's first and second Mission Schools, with the expectation that they will enhance mission life around the diocese.

X. STEWARDSHIP.

Mr. Morbey reported that Mr. Michael Strelka, a CPA and member of Holy Resurrection Church, Palatine, IL, will replace Mr. Warren Griggs.

XI. ST. MACRINA INSTITUTE.

Father Elijah Mueller reported that 47 students are enrolled in various states of the program. He asked that consideration be given to sending more people to the 2017 conference in Wisconsin. The Institute now has a presence in all deaneries, except Minneapolis, but added that enquiries have been received from parties in Saint Paul and Saint Cloud, MN.

XII. NEW BUSINESS.

- A.** Father Finley and Mrs. Petrykowski will be organizing and promoting a youth representation at the March for Life in Chicago, together with Ms. Kathy Kovalak of Zoe for Life. Bishop Paul suggested that Priest Andrew Bartek would be an excellent contact with whom they could work.
- B.** The next meetings will be June 7-8, 2017 and in conjunction with the Diocesan Assembly October 11-12.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned with the singing of the Hymn to the Theotokos at 2:30 p.m. upon motion by Mr. Garlick, seconded by Father Kuchta.

*Respectfully submitted/ Archpriest John Matusiak with Mr. Philip Sokolov
APPROVED by Bishop Paul/ Sunday, 18 December 2016.*

ADDENDUM.

In an e-mail sent to the diocesan officers, members of the Diocesan Council, and the Dean of the Chicago Deanery, dated 10 December 2016, Bishop Paul reported that he had met with Priest John Russin and the Parish Council of the Protection of the Virgin Mary Church, Merrillville, IN on December 3, 2016, regarding the status of their assessments. He further reported that their previously submitted plan by which the parish would continue to pay 10% of their monthly income as an assessment until such time as the parish's mortgage is fully paid, as approved by His Eminence, the late Archbishop Job, is unacceptable. He further reported that as of 1 October 2016, the parish was in arrears with regard to assessments by \$80,644.28; that the parish currently is operating at a deficit of \$29,500.00 for 2016 with a mortgage balance of \$575,000.00; that the parish had recently received a substantial donation; and that he had proposed that the parish pay off half of their assessments while forgiving the remaining half.

In summary, Bishop Paul noted that the parish proposed paying \$35,000.00 toward their assessments while applying the remaining \$5,000.00 to its 2017 assessment payments – which constitutes 50% of their debt to the diocese – while seeking relief with regard to the remaining \$40,000.00, all subject to the approval of the Diocesan Council. At its meeting of 7 December, the Parish Council formally approved the proposal.

Bishop Paul called for an e-vote on the proposal, which passed with 15 votes in favor and no votes against.

*Respectfully submitted/ Archpriest John Matusiak with Mr. Philip Sokolov
APPROVED by Bishop Paul/ Sunday, 18 December 2016.*