

# MEETING OF THE DIOCESAN COUNCIL

49th Assembly of the Diocese of the Midwest • Monday, 4 October 2010

## I. OPENING.

The meeting opened at 1:20 p.m. with the Prayer to the Holy Spirit led by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah, after which the chair was turned over to Archpriest John Zdinak, Chancellor.

## II. ATTENDANCE.

Members present: His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah, Locum Tenens; Archpriests John Adamcio, Andrew Clements, Mark Hodges, Michael Matsko, John Matusiak, Secretary, Thomas Mueller, Timothy Sawchak, Basil Stoyka, Christopher Wojcik, Andrew Yavornitzky, and John Zdinak, Chancellor; Priests Joseph Gibson and Stephen Hrycyniak; Mr. Sam D'Fantis, Mr. Michael Dorosh, Mrs. Alexa Geeza, Mrs. Ann Marie Gidus-Mecera, Mr. Robert Koncel, Treasurer, Mrs. Mary Jane Lucak, and Mr. Mark Stokoe. Guests present: Mr. Joseph Kormos.

## III. SCRIPTURE READINGS.

Fathers Adamcio and Clements read day's appointed readings from the Epistles and the Gospels.

## IV. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING.

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted upon motion by Father Stoyka, seconded by Father Wojcik.

## V. REPORT OF THE LOCUM TENENS.

While Metropolitan Jonah stated that he would save most of his comments for his opening Assembly address in the evening, he did note that he had visited most regions within the Diocese, maintains regular contact with the diocesan chancellor, has met with the district deans, and has tended to a number of pastoral and disciplinary matters. He said that it is "a real joy to see how this diocese is doing, growing, and experiencing a really positive spirit" and observed that "a lot of healing has taken place after scandal.

"My hope is that we're putting the scandal behind us and moving on," he added. "Certainly we have a lot of challenges to focus on in the future, especially that to which God is calling us in order to bear witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This is our main task. What I have seen in many parishes is healthy and positive; of course, some are struggling, experiencing the negative effects of economy, but even in these cases there's a good, Gospel-centered focus. The Church in such times can really offer consolation and hope."

He expressed his gratitude for the transfer of Protodeacon Joseph Matusiak to his omophorion, where he will fulfill new duties at the Chancery and Saint Vladimir's Seminary. "His work in the Midwest Chancery made things easier for me," he said. He added that he is certain that Philip Sokoloff will be an excellent job.

In response to various questions, Metropolitan Jonah reported that

- discussions with the Navigators – a Protestant campus /Bible study/discipleship ministry that maintains a conference center in Colorado that has been used by the Diocese of the West and the Holy Synod – are ongoing. There is a great deal of interest in Orthodoxy "on Orthodoxy's terms." Twenty to twenty-five percent of the Navigators' staff is of the Orthodox Christian faith. There is no formal dialogue with the group at this point, but discussions have focused on ways to coordinate some work in moving beyond the Protestant evangelical context.
- a more formal dialogue is being maintained with the Anglican Church in North America – a merger of some 20 bodies that severed ties with the Protestant Episcopal Church of the USA – on the national and regional levels. The next national meeting will be held at Nashotah House, Nashotah, WI, at the end of October 2010, in conjunction with the school's academic convocation at which he will receive an honorary doctorate. Two local dialogue groups are active in Pittsburgh and Fort Worth, TX. "Where this will lead, we're not sure, [but] it is" a missionary venture more than anything else."

## VI. CHANCELLOR'S REPORT.

Father Zdinak highlighted a number of points he plans to present in his report to the Assembly, including procedures for the forthcoming nomination of a candidate for diocesan bishop, finances, proposals for the episcopal consecration and installation, necessary repairs to the diocesan residence/center, etc. He also conducted nominations and appointments for the 49th Diocesan Assembly as follow.

- Elected as clergy and lay vice-chairs respectively, upon motion by Father Zdinak, seconded by Father Stoyka, were Father Matsko and Mr. D'Fantis.
- Appointed to the secretariat were Father Matusiak, Diocesan Secretary, Father Hodges, and Mrs. Gidus-Mecera.
- Appointed parliamentarian was Mr. Michael Herzak.
- Appointed to chair the nominations committee was Father Mueller.
- Appointed to oversee credentials was Archpriest Paul Wesche, dean of the Minneapolis Deanery.
- Appointed to chair the resolutions committee was Father Adamcio, with Fathers Hodges and Hrycyniak and Mr. Stokoe appointed to review all submitted resolutions.
- All deacons present as delegates will serve as tellers.

Metropolitan Jonah will preside at the Special Assembly, with Father Zdinak chairing the session and election.

Father Zdinak engaged council members in a discussion, within the context of this year's tight agenda, as to the feasibility

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of closing nominations with an appropriate motion without accepting nominations from the floor. After lengthy discussion, it was decided to follow this procedure.

In a discussion on the possibility of a three way tie during the election for a nominee for diocesan bishop, Father Wojcik moved, seconded by Mr. Dorosh, that all three candidates' names would be placed in a suitable receptacle and, after the assembly sings "O Heavenly King," the diocesan chancellor will draw two names. If, in the case of a two way tie on the second ballot, the same procedure will be followed, with the diocesan chancellor drawing one name. Passed unanimously.

### VII. DEANERY REPORTS.

- A. Chicago Deanery. Father Mueller noted that a printed addendum to his report was distributed at the registration desk.
- B. Cleveland Deanery. No additions.
- C. Columbus Deanery. No additions.
- D. Kansas City Deanery. Father Sawchak noted that Archpriest Thomas Succarotte of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary Church, Madison, IL, recently announced that he would be retiring, effective 31 December 2010. The Diocesan Assembly will convey love and prayers to Father Succarotte, to be drafted by Father Matusiak. It was also reported that Saint Sophia Church, Lawrence, KS is now known as Saint Nicholas of Myra Church.
- E. Michigan Deanery. No additions.
- F. Minneapolis Deanery. No additions.

### VIII. METROPOLITAN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES' REPORT.

Mr. Stokoe reported that the Metropolitan Council opened two weeks ago with a retreat led by Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko, who subsequently wrote a reflection on the gathering slated to be posted on [www.oceanews.org](http://www.oceanews.org). The retreat, which he characterized as "very conciliar... a wonderful exchange reflecting trust, cooperation, a marked difference from the past," was attended by four hierarchs and 30 Metropolitan Council members. With regard to the regular Metropolitan Council session, he noted that a "huge change" also was evident in such areas as legal matters, crediting the competent general counsel working for the OCA with settling the Alaskan land issue. He also reported on the settlement with the former OCA chancellor and related matters. With regard to finances, he reported that the 2009 audit was successful, that budget surpluses were anticipated for 2010 and 2011, and that a clean 2010 audit was forthcoming.

Other areas on which Mr. Stokoe reported included the Strategic Plan and the 16th All-American Council, to which His Eminence, Metropolitan Leo of Finland has been invited to be the main speaker.

The Metropolitan Council also discussed the relationship between itself, the Metropolitan, the Holy Synod, and the Church administration. With regard to confusion over the issue of autocephaly, the hierarchs will issue a five-point affirmation of autocephaly in the near future.

Father Matsko, who was thanked for representing the Diocese on the Metropolitan Council for the past three years, concurred, contrasting his recent experience to that of his last tenure some 30 years ago. Of late, he assisted with many investigations during his tenure. He noted that he did not wish to serve again, for no other reason than possible retirement. "All is going well, and we are regaining trust and moving in the right direction," he concluded.

In response to questions, Mr. Stokoe provided background information on the Alaska lands issue, which dates back to the second half of the 19th century.

### IX. EPISCOPAL SEARCH COMMITTEE REPORT.

Mr. Dorosh reported that the committee's work was drawing to a conclusion, apologizing that the interview CD was distributed late since it took longer to edit than anticipated. He offered a full explanation as to how the election will be conducted. He also said that one copy of committee's minutes and notes will be filed with the Diocese while other copies will be destroyed. Father Zdinak thanked Mr. Dorosh and his committee for their excellent work.

### X. TREASURER'S REPORT.

Mr. Koncel stated that his report stands as submitted, with the following revisions.

- On page 132 of the 2011 budget, pension for the bookkeeper was not included, adding \$8,987.00 while raising total expenses to \$417,881.26.
- Decrease in income should read \$43,098.74.

In related matters, Mr. Koncel reported that the Metropolitan's stipend – an expense of \$500.00 per month – appeared in the 2010 budget but does not appear in the 2011 budget. He asked what amount should be budgeted for 2011, noting that Metropolitan Jonah had requested that his remuneration in 2011 be given to help support a seminarian. The new diocesan bishop will be remunerated effective the day of his assignment, with the Metropolitan continuing as Locum Tenens until that time.

It was unanimously decided, upon motion by Father Wojcik and seconded by Father Matsko, that the Metropolitan's \$500.00 monthly stipend will continue until such time as he is no longer serving as Locum Tenens.

Mr. Kormos noted that the \$46,000.00 amount noted on page 131 included all Parish Health programs, not just travel.

The report and amended 2011 budget were accepted for presentation unanimously upon motion by Father Adamcio, seconded by Mr. D'Fantis.

**XI. PARISH DEVELOPMENT, MISSION REPORT.**

Father Mueller opined that the need for a more deliberate policy with regard to established missions is being addressed. "If you look at the parish and mission reports, you find missions that are over 10 years old, yet they report only a dozen members," he said. "We do not want to establish missions that become a burden for us to bear for not transitioning into parish status."

Mr. Kormos spoke about the recent, extremely successful OCA parish ministries conference held in Cleveland, in which a number of diocesan clergy and faithful participated.

**XII. OTHER BUSINESS.**

A. Father Zdinak opened a discussion on repairs and the maintenance of the Diocesan Center. Among the concerns are the need to replace the skylight and roof over the Bishop's apartment, repair of gutters [some within 1-2 years, others immediately], other leaks, etc. Estimated cost of painting the interior total \$15,970.00, although it was noted that interior work cannot be properly initiated until exterior work is completed. Roof and skylight replacement approximates \$21,300.00, with an estimated additional \$15,000.00 if the entire roof is replaced. [\$4,000.00 is anticipated in insurance funds.] Total estimated expenses is \$50,000.00.

The windows in the offices located in Christ the Saviour Church need to be sealed or replaced, although some were caulked with silicon. No estimates have been obtained to date.

Mr. Koncel reported that there is \$156,300.00 in the money market account and \$9,286.00 in the maintenance fund. With few anticipated expenses during the remainder of 2010, it was felt that necessary work can be financed.

Mrs. Gidus-Mecera motioned that instead of pursuing repairs, a committee be established to consider alternative sites for the Diocesan Center and residence. After brief discussion, she withdrew the motion.

Mrs. Gidus-Mecera motioned, seconded by Father Clements, to pursue exterior repairs in an amount not to exceed \$40,000.00. The motion passed with two nay votes.

Mrs. Gidus-Mecera motioned, seconded by Mr. Stokoe, to establish a committee to explore alternative sites for the Diocesan Center. After discussion, the motion was defeated.

Mr. Dorosh motioned, seconded by Mr. D'Fantis, to table the resolution and place it on the agenda of the November 2010 Diocesan Council meeting. Passed unanimously.

B. The agenda for the Diocesan Assembly was approved with two revisions.

- Page 4 should read "2011 budget presentation."
- Candidates for nomination to the office of diocesan Bishop will be introduced before the deanery reports.

**XIII. ADJOURNMENT.**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned with prayer at 4:15 p.m. upon motion by Father Adamcio, seconded by Mr. Dorosh.

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Archpriest John Matusiak, Diocesan Secretary*