

# Diocese of the Midwest of the Orthodox Church in America

## MINUTES OF THE DIOCESAN COUNCIL

Chicago, Illinois • Friday, 2 December 2011

### I. OPENING.

The meeting opened at 10:06 a.m. with the Prayer to the Holy Spirit led by His Grace, Bishop Matthias.

### II. ATTENDANCE.

Members present: His Grace, Bishop Matthias; Archpriests John Adamcio, Andrew Clements, Joseph Gibson, Alexander Kuchta, John Matusiak, Secretary, Timothy Sawchak, Basil Stoyka, Paul Wesche, Christopher Wojcik, Andrew Yavornitzky, and John Zdinak, Chancellor; Priests John Baker, Stephen Hrycyniak, and Herman Kincaid; Mr. Sam D'Fantis, Mr. Michael Dorosh, and Mr. Robert Koncel, Treasurer.

Also present were Mr. Joseph Kormos, Parish Health Ministries, and Mr. Philip Sokoloff, Diocesan Chancery.

### III. SCRIPTURE READINGS.

The day's appointed readings from the Epistles and the Gospels were read by Mr. Herzak and Father Wojcik respectively.

### IV. REPORT OF BISHOP MATTHIAS.

Bishop Matthias offered a review of his recent endeavors, noting that much already had been reported at the Diocesan Assembly held in conjunction with the 16th All-American Council. Highlights include the following.

- A. Archpriest Thomas Mueller has stepped down as Dean of the Chicago Deanery after 24 years of dedicated service. He will be especially honored in January, at which time he will be presented with a *Gramota*, to be prepared by Father Matusiak. Father Kinkaid has been appointed to succeed Father Mueller.
- B. In light of his involvement with and knowledge of the Diocesan Chancery, Father Baker has been appointed to the Bishop's Council, the first of five additional members to be appointed.
- C. Reorganization is underway at the Diocesan Chancery, as it has entered into a new relationship with Christ the Savior parish. After in-depth discussions with the parish, it was decided that all parish income will go to the diocese, thereby eliminating any question with regard to "who pays for what." "We will begin movement toward a 'merger' beginning in January 2012, and hopefully the 'merger' will be fully operational by January 2013," Bishop Matthias noted. Father Zdinak added that the studied approach is "very feasible," and that the parish will continue to maintain a budget, which they will be expected to meet. Further refinements will be considered prior to the June 2012 Diocesan Council meeting.
- D. In January 2012, Trudy Ellmore will begin addressing current and future needs with regard to the diocesan web site.
- E. With regard to stewardship, Bishop Matthias offered observations on discussions and decisions at the 16th All-American Council, noting that should the OCA assessments be reduced for 2013 and 2014, the difference will be used to augment diocesan ministries. It is crucial that a diocesan census be taken by the end of January. Concurrently, all parishes will be asked to submit copies of their current budgets. This information, he noted, is "absolutely necessary for implementing All-American Council decisions."

Bishop Matthias thanked those who, in so many ways, have helped him since his election, consecration, and installation.

### V. REPORT OF THE CHANCELLOR.

Father Zdinak reported that there was little to add to that which he reported at the Diocesan Assembly.

### VI. DEANERY REPORTS.

The district deans offered written reports, with the following additions.

- A. **Chicago Deanery:** Father Kinkaid has been appointed to succeed Father Mueller.
- B. **Cleveland Deanery:** With the retirement of Archpriest Vladimir Berzonsky, Holy Trinity Church, Parma, OH, is vacant.
- C. **Indianapolis Deanery:** The faithful of Saint John the Forerunner Church, Indianapolis, have broken ground for their new temple.
- D. **Kansas City Deanery:** Prospects for establishing a mission in Joplin, MO are most positive.
- E. **Michigan Deanery:** Detroit's Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral, while still experiencing serious financial difficulties, remains active, especially in the area of neighborhood outreach and ministry.
- F. **Minneapolis Deanery:** Saint Nicholas Church, Chisholm, WI, was closed three years ago. Final dispossession of the property is pending, and a market analysis, title search, and related issues are in process. The mission in Grand Rapids, MN, has been closed. Prospects for establishing a mission in Bemidji, MN are being explored.

### VII. METROPOLITAN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES' REPORT.

Father Alexander Kuchta noted that the various issues and situations being addressed by the Metropolitan Council "will have to play out," and that the work of that body, especially its committees, has progressed in a positive manner.

### VIII. PARISH HEALTH MINISTRY, MISSIONS.

Mr. Kormos reported that he has been in contact with others dioceses, including the Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern

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Pennsylvania, interested in parish health ministry. The Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania formed a committee in this regard, sought Mr. Kormos' advice, and did a thorough review of its operations.

### IX. TREASURER'S REPORT.

Highlights of Mr. Koncel's report include the following.

- A. He reviewed the situation of the handful of parishes with "assessment issues," including Saint Mary Cathedral, Minneapolis.
- B. The 2011 budgeted funds for the Parish Health Ministry have been depleted.
- C. Reserve fund balances were reviewed. Only \$10,000.00 remains in the maintenance fund.

Mr. Koncel added that "we'll be fine if we stick to the 2012 budget" during the new year, as "there is not a lot of margin to work with."

### X. COMMITTEE REPORTS.

The committee chairs offered written reports, with the following additions.

- A. **Finance Committee.** Mr. Koncel had nothing to add.
- B. **Missions Committee.** Mr. Kormos had nothing to add.
- C. **Strategic Planning Committee.** Father Adamcio had nothing to add.
- D. **Communications Committee.** Mr. Dorosh spoke about ways "to do the 'business' of the diocese better," and spoke the importance of establishing policies. He spoke at length about plans for the diocesan web site, videos, and other plans for expanding the diocese's overall communications efforts.
- E. **Policy Review Committee.** Father Yavornitzky reported on matters related to clergy compensation, with special emphasis on health insurance issues.
- F. **Compliance Committee.** Father Wojcik, working with Priest Nathan Kroll, are preparing questionnaires slated to be sent to all parishes concerning misconduct policies, insurance, and related matters.

### XI. OTHER BUSINESS.

- A. The 2012 Diocesan Assembly will be held in Cleveland, OH 2-4 October.
- B. The next meeting of the Diocesan Council will take place 12 June 2012 at the Diocesan Chancery, rather than at a hotel.

### XII. CLOSING.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded with prayer at 3:48 p.m. upon motion by Father John Adamcio, seconded by Mr. Dorosh.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Archpriest John Matusiak, Secretary of the Diocese of the Midwest  
Approved/ Bishop Matthias of Chicago and the Midwest*