

# Report on Catechist and Diaconal Vocations Program for the Diocese of the Midwest: Diocesan Assembly

by Fr. Elijah Mueller, *Diocesan Catechist and Diaconal Vocations Director*. 13<sup>th</sup> June, 2013, revised for Diocesan Assembly, 25<sup>th</sup> September 2013

The Diocesan Catechist and Diaconal Vocations program has been running for 2 years. Continuing the vision of Archbishop Job and with the support of Bishop Alexander the program continues to develop. If the program is to grow and develop, we feel there is need for more funding to address needs and accomplish more work toward goals.

## Accomplishments:

- Continuing work with students in Detroit, Lincoln NE, Southern IL and Cincinnati area.
- New Programs in Milwaukee and Chicago
- Expanding faculty
- Live internet video participation across far flung locales, i.e., Chicago based instructor interacting with students in other locales simultaneously. Still working out kinks in this.

## Developing

- Opening more locales: presently in discussion with Eastern OH (Indianapolis Deanery) and Kansas City.
- Work on developing shorter programs without vocational goal.
- Contact and beginning discussion with OCA Continuing Ed Director.
- Examination, discussion of possible use of St. Andrew's House in Detroit, perhaps for faculty training and yearly gathering of all diocesan students.
- Connections with other Midwestern Dioceses (Bulgarian, Romanian).
- Kansas City Deanery Program is developing a stand-alone program under the aegis of the Diocesan Program, with local faculty under the guidance of the Diocesan Faculty and Director.
- Supervising the arrangement of psych testing for diaconal candidates as per OCA mandate.

## Needs

- Travel to build up local programs.
- More dedicated hours for director (travel, office work, follow-up for diaconal and catechist candidates) *It is possible that this could be done in conjunction with some other job, tasks, expanded/connected mandate.*
- Better internet medium for conducting classes across distances.
- Way to fund students with limited means
- A procedure, similar to the diaconal, for vetting catechists (in particular, psych/background check)
- Arrangement of more faculty meetings for standardizing curriculum and building a cohesive diocesan institution.

- To set up Minneapolis and Cleveland programs and increase participation in Detroit Deanery. This should be arranged through visit of Director to meet with potential local faculty.
- Ways to certify "continuing ed" credits through Midwest CDV.
- Diocesan budgeting for psych testing for diaconal (catechist, too?) candidates.

**Proposals** (partly encouraged by discussion with some Deans and Bishop Alexander):

- To increase funding to program, to give the director (Fr. Elijah) at least one more day of paid work (doubling of present hours and payment). Would gladly take 2 more days!
- To fund scholarships for students
- To pay for better internet video connection
- To cover part of the costs for programming St. Andrew's House.

*Some of these things could be partly funded by Diocese in conjunction with local class/ Deanery.*

**Director's Compensation (2012):** Fr. Elijah has been paid for a day of work a week at the Diocesan center (\$500/month—see **A** below). Fr. Elijah's work is more than a day's work. Following the former direction of Bishop Matthias, *we run payments for classes through the Diocese*. This has meant that money goes in to the Diocese for a class, and then out to the instructor. This is done for transparency and to keep Diocesan records for a Diocesan class. Travel compensation is directed to be sent directly to the instructor. The instructors that have received diocesan compensation in this way are at present Fr. Elijah Mueller, Matushka Rebecca Luft and Eric Jobe (who both teach Old Testament) and Archdeacon Kirill for the Diaconal Practicum. (see **B** below) Instructors are all qualified with PhD, PhD candidates, or those who have completed doctoral courses and exams; or with significant work experience in academic theological teaching. In addition there was income and expenses from running the Diaconal Practicum at the beginning of January. The Bishop's Council voted to cover the travel expenses of the Diaconal Vocations Director. So far this has only been used to travel to Kansas City to do planning with the faculty group there.

*Compensation for Administration, Expense to Diocese, 2012-2013 July-December, total: \$3,000 January-June, total: \$3,000*

**Attached sheets—**

**A: Payments to and from Diocese for Instruction: income slightly above expense for Diocese.**

**B. List of students, status in program.**