

MEETING OF THE DIOCESAN COUNCIL OF THE DIOCESE OF THE MIDWEST

Chicago, Illinois • 8 June 2017

I. OPENING.

The meeting, convened at Christ the Savior Church, Chicago, opened with the celebration of Typika led by His Grace, Bishop Paul, at 9:55 a.m.

II. ATTENDANCE.

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

III. SCRIPTURE READINGS.

Father Dank read the day's Epistle reading [Romans 1:28–2:9] while Archpriest John Baker, Dean of Christ the Savior Church, read the day's Gospel reading [Matthew 5:27-32]. Reflections thereon were offered by Bishop Paul and Fathers Dank, Mueller, Wesche, Yavornitzky and Zdinak.

IV. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING.

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

V. REPORT OF BISHOP PAUL.

Bishop Paul opened his report by noting that he currently is making his "second round" of parish visitations. He noted that Priest Alexander Koranda has cleaned and organized the diocesan archives.

He spoke of his ongoing desire to develop a family ministry web page for the diocese. He reported that there are six or seven individuals who have expressed an interest in assisting with this effort and that he would be meeting with them in the near future.

Having sent out letters concerning the celebration of Saturday evening Vigil and "Cathedral Vigil," Bishop Paul announced that two additional letters, focusing on the celebration of Saturday evening Great Vespers apart from Vigil and Sunday morning Matins, would be forthcoming.

With regard to the 19th All-American Council, slated to convene in Saint Louis, MO in July 2018, Bishop Paul – who chairs the AAC Planning Committee – reported that preliminary plans are progressing quite well.

The 2018 Diocesan Assembly is tentatively scheduled to convene before the 18th AAC's Monday plenary session – from 1:30 until 4:30 p.m. He observed that this could be problematic since we are slated to vote on the Stewardship Proposal at that assembly. In a related matter, all deans will be making personal contact with their respective parishes that have not submitted requested stewardship data.

Bishop Paul announced that Priest Benjamin Tucci and Mr. David Lucs have prepared a survey for parents with regard to youth ministry. He asked that the survey be distributed in all parishes.

Finally, Bishop Paul recognized and thanked Father Adamcio for his many years of faithful ministry at Holy Trinity Cathedral and to the Diocese of the Midwest upon his impending retirement.

VI. CHANCELLOR'S REPORT.

Father Zdinak provided a detailed report highlighting the work of the Stewardship and By-Laws Committees and the ongoing discussions with Christ the Savior Church, Chicago.

He reported that all diocesan parishes currently have assigned clergy. He opined that the situation will be "interesting" in the next five to ten years as many of our priests are slated to retire, necessitating the need to identify candidates and encourage vocations.

VII. DEANERY REPORTS.

A. Chicago Deanery. Father Thomas Mueller added that Father Adamcio will be retiring in mid-June. He will be succeeded by Priest Alexander Koranda. He also added that on 14 May, Archpriest Mykola Bodnarchuk began his new assignment at Saint Nicholas Church, Joliet, IL, which for 16 months had been served by two retired clergy, Father John Matusiak and Father Ned Lunich of the Serbian Orthodox Diocese.

B. Cleveland Deanery. Father Clements added that Archpriest David Lis, Holy Ascension Church, Marblehead, OH, will be retiring at the end of June and that a potential successor has been identified. Archpriest Stacey Richter, Holy Assumption Church, Canton, OH will assume the pastorate of Saint Peter the Aleut Church, Minot, ND at the end of June, while Priest John Kennerk, a recent graduate of Saint Tikhon's Seminary, will be assigned to the Canton parish. Saints Peter and Paul Church, Lakewood, OH will be celebrating its 100th anniversary on July 1.

C. Indianapolis Deanery. Father Bobosh added that Archpriest Joseph Gibson, retired, is in declining health, while Archpriest Mark Hodges will be relieved of duties at Saint Stephen Church, Lima, OH at the end of July.

D. Kansas City Deanery. Father Sawchak added that Saint James Mission, Kansas City, is being closed. Priest Basil Ferguson, a recent graduate of Saint Tikhon's Seminary, will be assigned Priest-in-Charge of Saint Raphael Mission,

Quincy, IL, effective 9 July. Holy Trinity Church, Overland Park, KS will celebrate its 100th anniversary October 7-8.

- E. **Michigan Deanery.** Father Yavornitzky added that four parishes are engaged in the growing outreach ministry centered at Detroit’s Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral.
- F. **Minneapolis Deanery.** Father Wesche added that, with the assignments of Father Richter to Saint Peter the Aleut Church, Minot, ND, and Priest Herman Klarr to Holy Assumption Church, Lublin, WI, all deanery parishes have resident clergy. He noted that the closing of Saint Nicholas Church, Chisholm, MN was been finalized. He extended special thanks to Mr. Morbey for his involvement in the closing process in March 2017 with the establishment of a 501c3 foundation. The distribution of \$103,000.00 from the former mission in Chicago City among five Minneapolis Deanery missions has been completed. Finally, prayers were requested for Matushka Virginia Lecko, who has been ailing.

VIII. METROPOLITAN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES’ REPORT.

No additions were made to the written report.

IX. TREASURER’S REPORT.

In addition to his written report, Mr. Koncel noted that refinancing of the loan had been completed. He noted that he had reviewed the 2016 census reports and that the budget has been met. Our Fidelity funds have been reinvested with Morgan Stanley. With regard to the 2018 budget, he requested that items for consideration be submitted in the immediate future.

X. PARISH DEVELOPMENT/MISSIONS REPORT.

In addition to his written report, Father Thomas Mueller added that Mission Guidelines are now available. He noted that Mr. Joseph Kormos now receives a stipend. He suggested that the use of the \$500,000/00 Mission Endowment Fund be considered. In response, Father Kuchta, seconded by Mr. Morbey, moved “that the Finance Committee be charged with developing a policy recommendation to establish the Mission Endowment Fund as a true endowment fund with a suggested principal reservation of \$450,000.00.” Motion carried.

XI. VOCATIONS REPORT.

In the absence of Father Elijah Mueller, no report was offered.

XII. OLD BUSINESS.

A. Christ the Savior Church, Chicago. Mr. Morbey has been working with the parish’s leadership, pursuing the goal of the parish taking over ownership of the property. The parish will take on increased responsibility every year. Once the parish is able to provide appropriate financial maintenance of the property, fully covering expenses for three years, ownership of the property will be transferred. This should be accomplished in approximately ten years. When Father Zdinak, Mr. Morbey and Mr. Garlick are satisfied with the arrangement, it will be presented to the Diocesan Council, which then may present it to the Diocesan Assembly. It was noted that Christ the Savior parish is at present funding major tuckpointing work.

B. Stewardship Committee. Mr. Morbey, who chairs the committee, noted that financial information from parishes for the years 2015-2016 is being gathered.

XIII. NEXT MEETING, ADJOURNMENT.

The next regular meeting of the Diocesan Council will be held on Wednesday, November 29, 2017.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned with the singing of the Hymn to the Theotokos at 3:10 p.m. upon motion by Mr. Garlick, seconded by Father Adamcio.

*Respectfully submitted/ Archpriest John Matusiak with Mr. Philip Sokolov
APPROVED/ His Grace, Bishop Paul of Chicago and the Midwest*

Minneapolis Deanery Report Regarding the Distribution of the Funds from the Closing of Holy Cross
Mission in Chisago City, MN
Submitted to His Grace, Bishop Paul and to the Diocesan Council
June 8, 2017

When Holy Cross Mission in Chisago City, MN, closed toward the end of 2013, they had about \$103k in their treasury. They asked that these monies be applied exclusively toward missions in the Minneapolis Deanery. The Dean asked that the amount over \$100k (about \$3k) be given to the Deanery treasury to fund Dean visits to the mission parishes. That left \$100k to be given toward missions in the Minneapolis Deanery.

Once all hurdles were cleared and the monies were successfully transferred into the Diocesan treasury (this took almost a year), the Diocesan Treasurer placed them in a special fund to be held there until the Diocesan hierarchy should determine the manner and amounts of the funds' distribution.

His Grace, Bishop Paul, sought input from the Deanery clergy. The Deanery clergy met in early 2015 at the Cathedral and discussed different strategies for distributing the monies to maximum effect, but no consensus was reached. In November, 2015, His Grace, Bishop Paul, met with the deanery clergy at the Cathedral and led them in another discussion on the question, but again no consensus on the manner of distribution was reached.

It was agreed, however, that the Dean should visit each of the mission priests to gather information and to ascertain from each of them what were the needs of his particular parish that these monies might help address. The Dean completed the visits in late August of 2016. Another meeting of the Bishop and the Deanery clergy was held at the Cathedral in September, 2016. The Dean reviewed with His Grace and the brothers what he had learned from his visits with each of the mission priests.

By now, a consensus was settling among the deanery clergy that the Bishop, in consultation with the Dean, should distribute the monies as he deems best, with no restrictions placed on him by the Deanery. A final meeting of the Deanery with Bishop Paul took place in early 2017. Before that meeting, His Grace held a lengthy conversation with the Dean regarding the state of the mission parishes and the mission pastors and their families in the deanery. Together with the Deanery brothers, His Grace reached the conclusion that the monies should simply be distributed evenly between the five mission parishes, leaving how the monies should be applied at each mission parish to the discretion of each mission pastor and parish council.

The \$100k is therefore to be distributed evenly between these five mission parishes in the Minneapolis Deanery:

1. Holy Resurrection in Fargo, ND
2. Holy Myrrhbearers in St Cloud, MN
3. St Elizabeth in West St Paul, MN
4. Three Hierarchs in Northfield, MN
5. St Nicholas in Pella, IA.

Very Rev. Fr Paul Wesche
Dean, Minneapolis Deanery
Rector, St Herman's Orthodox Church
Minneapolis, MN

Report of Diocesan Metropolitan Council Representatives

Spring 2017 Metropolitan Council (MC) meetings took place from February 21-23 at the Immaculate Conception Seminary in Huntington (Long Island) NY.

Metropolitan Tikhon opened the meeting noting the upcoming fifth anniversary of his election as Primate. He considers the past 5 years as a period of transition, which is now completed, and proposed a timeline for dialogue and communication as a path to implementing the Four Pillars between now and the All-American Council in July, 2018. Metropolitan Tikhon proposed monthly sequences of presenting the Four Pillars and their subthemes over the next year; see the attached "The Twelve Months of the Four Pillars".

Fr. John Jillions, in his **Chancellor's report** noted the success of the new background check process through Protect My Ministry (PMM), which is being implemented as the standardized process throughout the OCA.

Fr. Eric Tossi, Secretary proposed a Corporate Gift Policy of the OCA that no church officer, agent or employee shall solicit or receive a thing of value in connection with their service to the OCA, nor shall they give anything of value for the purpose of influencing official Church action. Exceptions are made for items of minimal value, handmade gifts from children, and gifts of a religious character or significance which are customarily exchanged with religious bodies maintaining relations with the OCA. Anonymous gifts shall be conveyed to a charitable organization. The motion was carried.

A motion was submitted and carried to authorize \$20,000 for roof repairs to the Chancery building. Extensive remediation of the basement facilities of the OCA Archives, as recommended by consultants will be needed. A motion was presented that funds of the estate of John McGuire be dedicated for the preservation of records of the Church at such time as the funds are distributed to the OCA. The disbursement of the proceeds of over \$200,000 from the McGuire Family Charitable Trust is anticipated as soon as all related formalities are completed.

In **legal matters**, Judge E.R. Lanier, OCA General Council provided details on the mediated settlement reached with Bishop Matthias (Moriak), which is now a matter of public record. After insurance coverage, the remaining total liability of the Church in the case is \$10,000. A motion was made and was carried to ratify the expenditure of \$10,000 for settlement of the lawsuit by Bishop Matthias (Moriak).

In the **Treasurer's report**, Melanie Ringa noted the success of the transition to proportional giving, and she expressed satisfaction with the recent diocesan chancellors and treasurers meeting and recognized the value of these annual meetings. The net surplus for the year was \$290,212, which included some large, restricted gifts. The net operating surplus was \$26,714, vs. a budgeted surplus of \$3,750. The budget anticipated \$1.754 million from the dioceses, with the actual of \$1.780 million for 2016.

The **finance committee** also noted the productive and fruitful meeting of the diocesan chancellors and treasurers. It was suggested that the term "assessments" should no longer be used in reference to financial contributions from the dioceses.

Regarding **external affairs**, Fr. Alexander Kuchta made a motion, seconded by Fr. James Parnell to contribute \$1,000 to the Church World Service for refugee resettlement. The motion was tabled and referred to the Holy Synod.

Finally, the **pension board** presented a report on the OCA Pension Plan. The net time-weighted return for calendar year 2016 was 0.07%, due to the approximately 6.52% drag from the Milliman Strategy. Because of the

inability of the Milliman Strategy to deal with the volatility of the markets, a new balanced portfolio approach was adopted with elevated reserves of 15-18 months to prevent fire sales and down markets. The ending market value of plan assets at December 31, 2016 was \$23,399,266. There are 336 persons active in the plan, and 178 are receiving benefits. It was emphasized that priests should not break their continuing years of service in the plan because it would likely result in a significant loss of retirement benefits; a priest should join or remain in the plan, even in a small or struggling parish, even if the parish contribution is just \$100 or more.

Respectfully submitted,
Archpriest Alexander Kuchta
Bob Graban
April 29, 2017

The Twelve Months of the Four Pillars

Every month of the year will be devoted to one aspect of each of the four pillars. These are intentionally NOT appeals for any of the areas, although they could overlap with such appeals (SOCA, Seminaries, etc).

Each aspect may be further subdivided into weekly components. This could be an opportunity to expand the contributed articles on the website. We would solicit various authors (bishops, clergy, faithful, monastics, seminarians, etc.) for contributions to the topic of the month/week.

PROPOSED SEQUENCE

- I. April 2017: *IV. External Relations: OCA History Month (Pascha)*
- II May 2017: *II. Stewardship: OCA Departments/Charities*
- III. June 2017: *III. Spiritual Life: Seminaries (Old Seminary Appeal month)*
- IV. July 2017: *III. Outreach and Evangelism: Contemporary Moral and Ethical Issues*
- V. August 2017: *III. Outreach and Evangelism: Mission Planting Grants/ Revitalization (Mission School)*
- VI. September 2017: *II. Stewardship: Sanctity of Life Issues; the environment (Sept. 1)*
- VII. October 2017: *IV. External Relations: Relations with our Orthodox Neighbors (ACOB Meeting)*
- VIII. November 2017: *I. Spiritual Life: Clergy Health*
- IX. December 2017: *IV. External Relations: Relations with our non-Orthodox Neighbors*
- X. January 2018: *II. Stewardship: The Patrimony of the Church (Chancellors /Treasurers meeting)*
- XI. February 2018: *I. Spiritual Life: Monasteries/Pilgrimages (Prep. for Lent)*
- XII. March 2018: *III. Outreach and Evangelism: Communications (Lent)*