

MINUTES
DIOCESE OF THE MIDWEST DIOCESAN COUNCIL
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
26 JUNE 2007

The continuation of the 9 May 2007 meeting of the Midwest Diocesan Council opened with the Service of Intercession for the Church celebrated by His Eminence, Archbishop Job, at 10:20 a.m.

I. ROLL.

A. Members present. His Eminence, Archbishop Job; Archimandrite Vladimir [Wendling]; the Very Revs. John Adamcio, Vladimir Berzonsky, Andrew Clements, Michael Matsko, John Matusiak [Secretary], Basil Stoyka, and John Zdinak [Chancellor]; the Rev. Bartholomew Wojcik; Mr. Sam D'Fantis, Mr. Michael Herzak, Mr. Robert Koncel [Treasurer], Mrs. Mary Jane Lucak, Ms. Kitty Mabus, Mr. John Sedor, and Dr. Richard West.

B. Deans present. The Very Revs. Thomas Mueller, Timothy Sawchak, John Steffaro, Thaddeus Wojcik, and Andrew Yavornitzky.
Also present were Deacon Joseph Matusiak, assistant to the Archbishop, and Mr. Joseph Kormos, diocesan parish health coordinator.

II. SCRIPTURE READINGS.

Mr. Herzak read the day's appointed reading from Romans, while Fr. Yavornitzky read the appointed reading from the Gospel of Saint Matthew. A brief discussion followed.

III. ARCHBISHOP'S OPENING REMARKS. Archbishop Job welcomed the council members and deans, and noted the importance of today's meeting. With regard to the "Palatine Resolution," he noted that there are many different views on the issue of placing assessments in escrow, and that he sees valid points at both ends of the spectrum. Nevertheless, he felt that a consensus would be achieved in addressing the "Palatine Resolution."

IV. CHANCELLOR'S REPORT. Fr. Zdinak noted that there is no formal agenda for the meeting, other than to revisit the "Palatine Resolution" and to offer a prayerful, objective response to it. He asked that, in order to allow sufficient time, each speaker would be limited to three minutes.

V. METROPOLITAN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES' REPORT. Fr. Berzonsky read his written report on the meeting of the Metropolitan Council held 12-13 June 2007. Archbishop Job noted that, with Fr. Berzonsky's permission, the report had been posted on the diocesan web site the previous evening. After Fr. Berzonsky completed the reading of his report, Dr. West added that the Metropolitan Council had called for the reinstatement of the special investigation commission/committee and the release of its report to the

Church. He observed that, while the Metropolitan Council had "fixed a number of things," it has yet to "remove the splinter." Lengthy discussion ensued, during which Diocesan Council members shared a wide spectrum of opinions and observations.

VI. CONTINUATION OF THE MORNING DISCUSSION.

After lunch, Archbishop Job read the letter he sent to Metropolitan Herman in early June 2007, requesting that a special meeting of the Holy Synod of Bishops be held in July. While he received responses from several bishops to this proposal, all of which were positive, he has yet to hear from Metropolitan Herman as to whether the special meeting will be scheduled. (*His Eminence has since received an invitation from His Beatitude setting the 2007 Special Session of the Holy Synod of Bishops for July 31, 2007.*)

He emphasized that the purpose of the proposed meeting, in addition to fostering more open communications between members of the Holy Synod, was to offer to assist Metropolitan Herman in light of the present situation. In the discussion that followed it was evident that the members of the Diocesan Council felt strongly that the special meeting needs to be held. It was the consensus of the members that Archbishop Job's letter should be posted on the diocesan web site.

VII. DEANS' REPORTS.

The deans, who had been asked to poll the clergy in their respective deaneries with regard to the "Palatine Resolution," reported on their findings.

A. Chicago Deanery. Fr. Mueller reported that the majority of deanery clergy were not in favor of escrowing assessments. Three priests were in favor of escrowing, while three others did not respond.

B. Michigan Deanery. Fr. Yavornitzky reported that the deanery clergy were almost evenly split on the matter.

C. Minneapolis Deanery. Fr. Thaddeus Wojcik reported that all of the priests of the deanery, except for one, were in favor of escrowing assessments.

D. Cleveland Deanery. Fr. Steffaro reported that the majority of the priests of the deanery were in favor of escrowing assessments.

E. Columbus Deanery. It was reported that, at a recent gathering of the majority of deanery clergy, the consensus was that assessments should be escrowed.

F. Kansas City Deanery. Fr. Sawchak reported that the deanery clergy were almost evenly split on the matter.

Archbishop Job noted that there was no clear consensus among diocesan clergy. While he reiterated that "extreme times call for extreme measures," he also stated that he will abide by whatever decision the members of the Diocesan Council affirm. He also noted that those parishes already withholding assessments will be informed that they are to send to the Diocesan Chancery monies they have individually placed in escrow, adding

that withheld assessment revenue may not be used for a parish's own needs. The Diocese will escrow assessment monies already withheld by these parishes.

VIII. CONSIDERATION OF THE "PALATINE RESOLUTION."

A lengthy and frank discussion was held on the "Palatine Resolution." Each Diocesan Council member and dean was asked to share his or her insights, after which Council members broke into two groups to draft a response to the original resolution. After further discussion, the following resolution was presented upon motion by Fr. John Adamcio, seconded by Mr. John Sedor.

"In the spirit of the resolution passed at the October 2006 Diocesan Assembly in Palatine, IL, and in recognition of the fact that circumstances have changed since that time, we move that the Diocese of the Midwest will place Central Church assessment payments it receives in escrow. All diocesan parishes are to remit their Central Church and diocesan assessments to the diocesan treasurer in the usual manner.

Assessment payments will be forwarded to the Central Church as noted below.

"1. The July 2007 assessment payments to the Central Church will be remitted at a special meeting of the Holy Synod of Bishops called in accordance with the Statute of the Orthodox Church in America.

"2. The August 2007 assessment payments to the Central Church will be remitted after the release to all Church members of all reports of the special investigation commission and when the commission renews its unhindered investigation, as directed by the Metropolitan Council.

"3. The October 2007 assessment payments to the Central Church will be remitted when a clear plan for convening an All-American Council in 2008 is announced."

"If one or any of the aforementioned points are not fulfilled the diocese will place all assessment payments to the Central Church in escrow until the requested actions are fulfilled."

The resolution passed with 13 voting in favor of the motion and one voting against it.

It was further noted that Archbishop Job will address those parishes that are already withholding assessments, per earlier discussion, and that parishes that do not remit assessment payments to the diocesan treasurer will not be seated at the Diocesan Assembly.

IX. TREASURER'S REPORT. Mr. Koncel commented briefly on a variety of

financial matters, including the need for sufficient funds to continue the work of the parish health facilitator, Mr. Kormos. After a thorough discussion, the following motion was presented by Fr. Andrew Clements, seconded by Fr. John Adamcio.

"The Diocesan Council, endorsing the work of the parish health facilitator, recommends that delegates to the October 2007 Diocesan Assembly approve a one-time \$10.00 per adult member increase in the diocesan assessments to provide appropriate funding for the facilitator's work for 2008 and 2009."

The motion passed with 10 voting in favor of the motion, three voting against it, and two abstentions.

X. NEXT MEETING.

The Bishop's Council will meet on 1 October 2007, the eve of the Diocesan Assembly, at noon. The joint meeting of the Bishop's Council and the Diocesan Council will be held at 5:00 p.m. the same day.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned with the singing of the Hymn to the Theotokos at 4:00 p.m. upon motion by Mrs. Lucak, seconded by Fr. Matsko.

Respectfully submitted,
Father John Matusiak, Secretary
26 June 2007

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