

MEETING OF THE DIOCESAN COUNCIL OF THE DIOCESE OF THE MIDWEST

Munster, Indiana • 8 October 2018

I. OPENING

The meeting of the Diocesan Council, convened at the True BBQ & Whiskey Bar, Munster, IN at 2:00 p.m. on Monday, 8 October 2018, opened with the singing of “O Heavenly King” led by His Grace, Bishop Paul.

II. ATTENDANCE.

In addition to Bishop Paul, Council members in attendance included Archpriest John Zdinak, Chancellor; Robert Koncel, Treasurer; Archpriests John Adamcio and James Dank; Priests Nicholas Finley and Herman Kincaid; Protodeacon George Potym; and Dennis Garlick, Ellyn Gillette, Robert Graban, Simeon Morbey and Carrie Sabourin. Bishop’s Council members in attendance included Archpriests Andrew Clements, Timothy Sawchak, Dusan Koprivica and Paul Wesche. Also in attendance was Philip Sokolov, Bishop Paul’s Secretary.

III. SCRIPTURE READINGS.

Mr. Graban read the day’s selection from the Epistles – Philippians 2:12-15 -- while Father Dank read the day’s Gospel reading – Luke 7:36-50. Bishop Paul offered a reflection on the Epistle reading.

IV. BISHOP’S REPORT.

Bishop Paul reported that between 29 June and the first week in August, he participated in the 19th All-American Council and the Small Parish Forum and visited three regional camps, in addition to his parish visits. He also attended the 50th Anniversary of the Monastery of the Transfiguration, Ellwood City, PA. In September he continued his parish visits and attended the Fall Session of the Metropolitan Council. He spoke most positively about his experiences at the three camps he visited.

With regard to the All-American Council, he opined that all went quite well, and that the presentation by youth participants was a highlight of the week.

Bishop Paul observed that, while we all “want more” from Syosset, doing so puts additional responsibilities on a smaller Chancery staff funded with less money. He also reported that His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon has accepted the resignations of the OCA Chancellor, Secretary and Treasurer. A new team will be in place by the start of the new year.

Bishop Paul shared his excitement with regard to the recently launched Family Website, for which he writes a weekly reflection and invites guest articles. He also spoke of the third livestream, held on the eve of this meeting, which generated a lively discussion on “Teen Realities.” Another virtual youth retreat is slated to be held in mid-November, linking youth at six locations throughout the diocese for a discussion with His Grace.

Father Adamcio, now retired and ineligible to run for reelection, was thanked for his many years of service as a member of the Diocesan Council.

V. CHANCELLOR’S REPORT.

Father Zdinak discussed a number of matters concerning the Assembly. The registration table is being handled by Saint Mary’s Parish, Merrillville, IN. Appointed to the Assembly Secretariat were Archpriest John Matusiak, Philip Sokolov and Ellyn Gillette. Father Koprivica will chair the Nominating Committee, of which Father Clements, Mr. Garlick and Ms. Sabourin will serve as members. The Resolution Committee, which will be chaired by Archpriest Theodore Bobosh, will include Father Finley and Mr. Graban. Attending deacons will handle credentials and serve as tellers.

Father John offered updates on the following matters.

A. Bylaws Revision. The Bylaws Revision was approved by the Diocesan Council by e-vote prior to the meeting, with all but one yeas vote. The proposed Revision will be presented at the Assembly.

B. Budget. The budget was discussed briefly. Father Zdinak noted that the addition of a *keleinik* appears in the budget, with remuneration of \$15.00 per hour. The *keleinik* will travel with Bishop Paul, work in the office two days each week as the “compliance officer” responsible for tracking information received from parishes, and fulfill related duties.

C. Proportional Giving. By way of background, in 2012 the Diocesan Assembly mandated the study of proportional giving. Bishop Paul appointed Mr. Morbey to head a task force charged with overseeing this study. At this year’s Assembly, delegates will vote on embracing a 13% tithe, which will replace the former per capita assessment. He explained that we have not raised the per capita assessment since 2009. With regard to the new system, parishes would submit their financial numbers using a form similar or identical to the percentage calculation form which the task force has been using to gather data since 2012. The Diocese will send out invoices based on each parish’s most recently reported numbers -- i.e., from two years ago. Bishop Paul will further articulate this matter in his Assembly address.

VI. TREASURER’S REPORT.

Mr. Koncel opened by explaining that the Special Projects Fund, the balance of which currently stands at \$48,575.89, could be used for property maintenance, youth programs, or any number of other projects that may arise.

In response to a question concerning why the budget has been increased by \$200,000.00, Mr. Koncel noted that, while a breakdown will be presented at the Assembly, the bulk of the increase is reflected in the \$16,500.00 increase in Bishop Paul's salary, the aforementioned \$48,575.89 in the Special Projects Fund, and the \$27,000.00 earmarked for the *keleinik*. He noted that as the Diocesan budget increases, so does the percentage due to the OCA.

Father Zdinak asked if the Finance Committee, in conjunction with Bishop Paul, can be authorized to address hardship appeals from individual parishes. The Diocesan Council noted that this is indeed possible.

Upon motion by Father Kincaid, seconded by Father Adamcio, the 2019 budget was accepted as presented and will be voted on at the Assembly.

VII. MESSAGING STRATEGY REPORT.

Ms. Sabourin presented a written report in which she raised the possibility of redesigning the Diocesan website and related issues. After discussion, and upon motion by Mr. Morbey and Mr. Koncel, it was decided to appoint a task force to explore options for said redesign, including social media, and bring its findings to the Diocesan Council. Appointed to organize this effort were Father Kincaid and Ms. Sabourin. Other possible task force members include Archpriest John Schroedel, Priest Joel Wilson, and Stacy Sennott.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT.

The next meeting of the Diocesan Council will be held November 28-29, 2018.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:04 p.m. with the singing of the Hymn to the Theotokos.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Philip Sokolov with Archpriest John Matusiak, Diocesan Secretary

CARRIE
SABOURIN

MESSAGING STRATEGY

*Creating a connection between
the Diocese of the Midwest and
the saints of the Diocese.*



CURRENT SITUATION

- The Diocese of the Midwest is operating based on funds available versus starting with what's possible or needed and building the budget from there
 - Limiting growth on a Diocesan, parish and financial levels

INSIGHTS

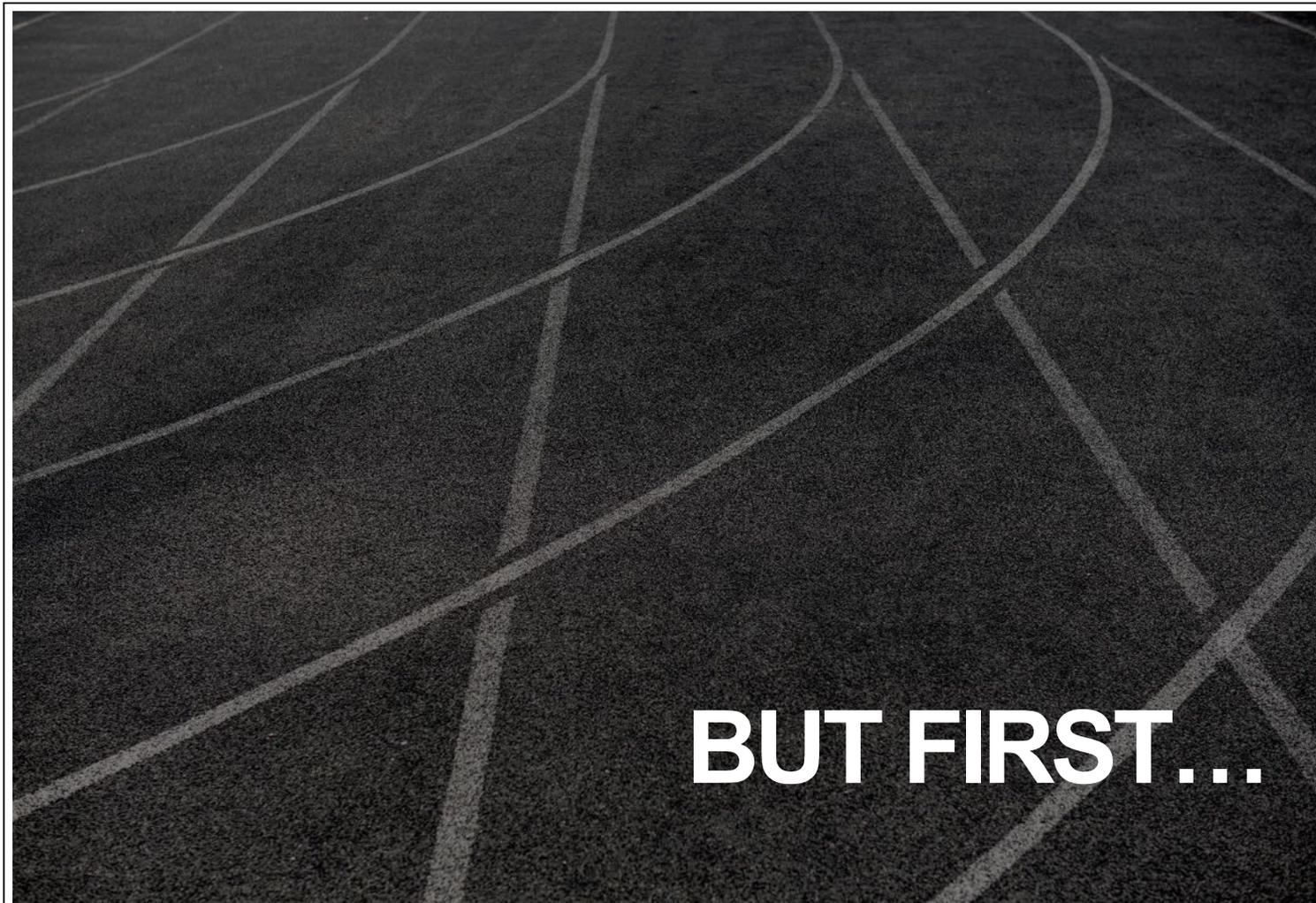
- Parishioners want to know how their donations are being used
- Parishioners don't understand the purpose or role of the Diocese of the Midwest

GOAL

- Create a connection between the Diocese of the Midwest and day-to-day parish life

STRATEGY

- Define the vision of the Diocese of the Midwest as it relates to parish life
- Humanize the Diocese of the Midwest



BUT FIRST...

CARRIE
SABOURIN

6

THE ORTHODOX CHURCH OF AMERICA MISSION

- The Mission of the Orthodox Church in America, the local autocephalous Orthodox Church, is to be faithful in fulfilling the commandment of Christ to “Go into all the world and make disciples of all Nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all [things that He has] commanded” so that all people may be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth:
 - To preach, in accordance with God’s will, the fullness of the gospel of the Kingdom to the peoples of North America and to invite them to become members of the Orthodox Church.
 - To utilize for her mission the various languages of the peoples of this continent.
 - To be the body of Christ in North America and to be faithful to the tradition of the Holy Orthodox Church.
 - To witness to the truth, and by God’s grace and in the power of the Holy Spirit, to reveal Christ’s way of sanctification and eternal salvation to all.

LOCALIZING THE MISSION

The Orthodox Church of the Midwest

- Fulfill the command of Christ
- Go into the world to make disciples
- Baptize them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Teach them to observe all (the things He) has commanded

Bishop Paul

- Fulfilling the mission of the OCA in the Midwest
- Helping parishes equip saints for ministry

Diocese of the Midwest

- Supporting the Bishop in his role of fulfilling the mission of the OCA in the Midwest
- Supporting the Bishop in his role of helping parishes equip saints for ministry

BRINGING IT TO LIFE: MESSAGING HIERARCHY

Diocese of the Midwest:
Equipping saints for ministry

Clergy

Parish Life

Saints

Pastoral care

Parish
development
& life

Seminarian
support

Liturgical
music
resources

Bible studies

Missions
resources

Youth
program?

St. Macrina
Orthodox
Institute

Family Life
website

IN APPLICATION

- Messaging hierarchy becomes the basis for decision-making
 - E.g. How successful are we being in equipping saints for ministry? Do we need more programs for Clergy? Parishes? Family Life?
- Messaging hierarchy becomes the basis for communications
 - The website follows the same structure
 - Basis for social media strategy and allows for leveraging current content
 - The message tone changes from “this is what we are doing” to “this is how we can help”

NEXT STEPS

- Agree on messaging hierarchy
- Implement strategy
 - Website update
 - Goal: Bring forward the mission of the Diocese and make it more user-friendly
 - Develop communications plan
 - How is this communicated to Clergy? To parishioners?

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THANK YOU

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