

**59TH ASSEMBLY OF THE DIOCESE OF THE MIDWEST**  
**Online Virtual Meeting • 8 October 2020**

**I. OPENING.**

The Assembly opened with the prayer “O Heavenly King” and the Prayer to Open a Sacred Council at 5:05 p.m. (Central), 6:05 p.m. (Eastern), after which His Eminence, Archbishop PAUL, called the Assembly to order. Mr. Philip Sokolov asked the Assembly delegates for the Consent to Record the meeting and stated that if anyone is opposed to this to send Philip a “chat” message with their name. Philip also briefly reviewed the “unmute” and “chat” features advising the Assembly delegates that they would be voting by sending a “chat” message to Philip with their name and corresponding vote, “yes” or “no.”

**II. CREDENTIALS**

Voting: 56 clergy delegates, 32 lay delegates, 6 diocesan council members, and 2 auditors, for a total of 96 participants. Guests: 2 Deacons, Mr. Philip Sokolov, 1 Observer, 1 Retired Clergy.

**III. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS, APPOINTMENTS**

Archpriest John Zdinak, Chancellor, moved on behalf of the Diocesan Council that there will be two items to vote on during the meeting, namely, the Marshfield Property and the 2021 Budget. The following appointments are in place for the meeting: Presidium: Archbishop PAUL & Father Zdinak; Secretariat: Priest Herman Kincaid, Philip Sokolov, & Ellyn Gillette; Tellers: Priest Herman Kincaid, Philip Sokolov, & Ellyn Gillette. Tellers are also responsible for the Credentials.

**IV. ADDRESS OF ARCHBISHOP PAUL**

Archbishop PAUL read his address, *We Forge On*, as posted on the website. He reviewed the challenges posed by COVID 19 and how the Diocese is learning to live with it. He also highlighted the work going on the following ministries within the Diocese: Liturgical, Multicultural, Priestly and Mission Development, Youth, and Mother Maria of Paris in which he thanked Fr. Jonathan Lincoln for his organization and promotion of this charitable ministry. Archbishop PAUL went on further to thank the Task Force of Ellyn Gillette, Mary Ann Bobulsky, and Fr. Jacob Van Sickle, for exploring and developing a draft job description for a Development Director position in the Diocese. He also thanked Fr. Alexander Koranda for stepping into the Communications Director position with enthusiasm, dedication, and creativity. Memory Eternal to Fr. John Matusiak, who previously held the position. Archbishop PAUL thanked Fr. Herman Kincaid for managing the Facebook Page along with Carrie Sabourin and Fr. Joel Wilson, who together provided leadership in the development of the Diocese’s new website, Equipping the Saints for Ministry. Archbishop PAUL also encouraged the Assembly to vote to reopen the monastery in Marshfield, Missouri. In conclusion, he said that life in the Diocese is going forward and that he continues to pray for his brothers and sisters in Christ as *We Forge On*.

**V. CHANCELLOR’S REPORT & MARSHFIELD PROPERTY ITEM.**

Father Zdinak commented on how focused His Eminence is concerning administrative tasks and accountability. He also asked if there were any questions for the Archbishop. Lastly, Father Zdinak presented for questions and vote the Marshfield Property matter. The Diocesan Council, at its September 15, 2020 special meeting, accepted Archbishop PAUL’s recommendation that the Diocese take possession of the former monastery property from the Springfield parish to be established as a monastery under His Eminence’s omophorion. An anonymous donation of \$100,000 will be made to the Diocese upon approval of this proposal. This donation will retire any debt held by the Springfield parish related to the monastery property and fund minor improvements to the monastery property. In accordance with Diocesan Bylaws, the Diocesan Council motions

for this matter to be voted on by the Diocesan Assembly. He asked the Assembly delegates to vote “yes” or “no” by sending a “chat” message to Philip Sokolov. VOTE: YES – 67, NO – 1. MOTION PASSED with the required 2/3 majority in favor.

#### **VI. TREASURER’S REPORT.**

Mr. Robert Koncel, Treasurer, reviewed the financial highlights for 2019 and January – June, 2020, which are all included in his reports on the website. He also posted a video overview on the Diocesan website. Rob reported that the Diocese was meeting all financial targets and that we have not had to spend the funds (loan) received from the Payroll Protection Program (PPP) from the CARES Act as of yet.

#### **VII. AUDITORS’ REPORT.**

Mr. Robert Koncel stated that the auditors could not complete the audit this year due to COVID 19 travel restrictions. The audit will be completed in the future.

#### **VIII. ADOPTION OF 2021 BUDGET**

Mr. Robert Koncel reviewed the proposed 2021 budget, which is posted on the Diocesan website. He also mentioned that if any parish wants to set up direct deposit for the monthly assessment to contact him. Holy Trinity Cathedral in Chicago has been using direct deposit and it is working well. Assembly delegates were asked to cast their vote for the proposed 2021 budget by sending a “chat” message to Philip Sokolov. The 2021 budget was adopted unanimously.

#### **IX. DEANERY REPORTS**

There were no additions to the 6 Deanery reports, which are posted on the website.

#### **X. OTHER REPORTS**

Father Zdinak stated that all ministry reports are available for review on the Diocesan website.

#### **XI. 50TH ANNIVERSARY AUTOCEPHALY CELEBRATION**

Archbishop PAUL expressed his disappointment in not being able to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Autocephaly throughout the Diocese this year due to COVID 19. He hopes that we can re-schedule the celebrations next year.

#### **XII. DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR POSITION**

Archbishop PAUL stated that we have allocated money in the 2021 budget for a Development Director position in the Diocese, but that we will only pursue this if the ministries needing the funds can document their action plans with the associated implementation costs. This information would be used by the Development Director to raise the needed funds.

#### **XIII. OPEN DISCUSSION**

Father Zdinak stated that the employer contribution portion for OCA pension will increase to 10% in 2021. There was discussion about the annual September 15<sup>th</sup> report and that it may make sense to make this report a numbers report, more demographic in nature, since the Annual Meeting reports from the parishes typically cover the other areas, such as challenges and opportunities. Archbishop PAUL stated that the membership numbers in the Diocese have increased since proportional giving was implemented. More discussion will occur regarding this report.

#### **XIV. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, and upon motion by Mr. Simeon Morbey, the Assembly adjourned at 6:37 p.m. (Central), 7:37 p.m. (Eastern) with The Hymn to the Theotokos.

*Respectfully submitted by the Secretariat,*

*Ellyn Gillette*

*Philip Sokolov*

*Edited by Priest Herman Kincaid, Diocesan Secretary*