

Report of Diocesan Metropolitan Council Representatives

Since the last report, the Metropolitan Council met via five videoconferences (Zoom). This report will focus on items of particular interest to the Diocese and other potentially actionable items.

November 4, 2020: A balanced budget of \$1.8M for 2021 was approved, and a resolution to ask for PPP forgiveness (CARES Act) was passed. \$195,958.64 was ultimately forgiven, which was approximately \$1,200 more than was originally requested. For 2021, the proportional giving rate of our diocese is 40%, which goes down to 38% in 2022. Efforts to sell the Syosset Chancery and relocate the archives continue. The Legal Committee reported that *Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America v. Duvlea and Holy Trinity Monastery* case was concluded in favor of the OCA's Romanian Episcopate. A separate case of *Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America v. Gheorghe Carstea and Saint Nicholas Church* was in Oakland County Circuit Court awaiting scheduling. This focuses on issues of possession and control of a parish in Troy, Michigan, and is a functional companion case to the Duvlea case mentioned above.

Extraordinary Session November 19, 2020: Approval was given to postpone the All American Council to the week of July 18, 2022. Subsequently, it was agreed that it will remain in Baltimore, in the venue originally contracted. Two offers to buy the Syosset property were received at \$5 million and \$5.5 million. A motion was approved to authorize the MC Property Committee to negotiate a counteroffer, contingent on approval by the Metropolitan Council and Holy Synod. No deals were reached.

Spring Session, February 24, 2021: Following a report from the OCA Pension Board, the MC "reiterated its resolution adopted a year ago, requesting that the Holy Synod create a joint commission, composed of Holy Synod and Metropolitan Council members, to enforce compliance with the mandate of the OCA Statute and All-American Council decisions, that all eligible clergy are to be enrolled in the OCA Pension Plan." The Pension Board reported 14 additional clergy joined the plan since the last meeting, and about 85% of those eligible are enrolled.

Spring Session (Continued), March 3, 2021: OCA departments have been reorganized, with Archpriest Thomas Soroka, Project Manager of the Departments of the OCA highlighting the various completed, ongoing or pending projects and tasks. An adult catechism project is nearing completion. Spanish language missionary work and publications were also discussed.

Special Session, May 11, 2021: His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon paid tribute to the recently departed Archpriest Antonio Perdomo for his work as a member of the MC and his Spanish language ministry. "*Memory eternal*" was sung for Fr. Antonio, as well as Metropolitan Theodosius and Protopresbyter Daniel Hubiak, who played large roles in the work of the Metropolitan Council. The MC endorsed Fr. Alessandro Margheritino for the position of OCA Secretary, in accordance with the OCA Statute, for confirmation by the Holy Synod. The property committee reported on the ongoing efforts to sell the Chancery (Westwood property), and the MC approved extending the realtor's contract through December 31, 2021.

In response to questions Metropolitan Tikhon has been receiving regarding the Pension Plan, His Beatitude asked treasurer Andrew Smith to form an ad hoc committee to assist in answering the questions. The committee of Fr. John Hopko, Andrew Smith, and Robert Popadic finished a report. In anticipation of this report being released to the Metropolitan Council, His Beatitude formed a smaller committee within the MC under the direction of Andrew Smith, to examine this report first, and then to present it to the Metropolitan Council at a future meeting. Members of this subcommittee are Andrew Smith, Archpriest Joseph Ciarciaglino, David Lane, Donna Dimitri, and Bob Graban. "The formation of this committee and its tasks are necessary preconditions to the work of the committee that will be formed as mandated by decisions of the Spring 2020 and 2021 sessions of the Metropolitan Council".

[October 1, 2021 update: A special virtual MC meeting was held on September 30 to present the pension report to the MC mentioned in the paragraph above. This was an information-only meeting, with action to be taken at the in-person meeting the week of October 18.]

Respectfully submitted,
Bob Graban
Fr. Elijah Mueller
June 15, 2021