

**Orthodox Church in America**  
**Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania**  
**148<sup>th</sup> Diocesan Council Meeting**  
**February 14, 2008**

His Grace, the Right Reverend TIKHON, Bishop of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania, opened the 148<sup>th</sup> Session of the Diocesan Council of the Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania, with prayer at 10:30 am.

Present at this meeting of the Diocesan Council were:

His Grace, the Right Reverend TIKHON, Bishop of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania

Archpriest John Kowalczyk, Diocesan Chancellor

Priest Martin Browne, Diocesan Treasurer

Archpriest Vladimir Fetcho, Dean – Wilkes-Barre Deanery

Archpriest John Udics, Dean – Philadelphia Deanery, Secretary of the Diocesan Council

Frackville Deanery: Priest Timothy Hojnicky Elsie Herman

Wilkes-Barre Deanery: Priest Nicholas Solak Mary Sernak

Delegates At Large: Archpriest Daniel Kovalak Marie Proch

Metropolitan Council representatives: Father John Onofrey

**The Minutes of the 147<sup>th</sup> Diocesan Council Meeting** were distributed and read. Father Onofrey moved to accept the minutes with corrections, seconded by Elsie Herman. The motion passed.

**The Minutes of the 44<sup>th</sup> Diocesan Assembly** were reviewed. Father Kowalczyk discussed use of personal electronic recorders to record the proceedings of the Assembly. Discussion of the nature of minutes (word by word or highlights of topics and motions) took place.

**The Report of His Grace, Bishop TIKHON**

His Grace expressed his satisfaction with the Assembly. He had not much to report on the National Church – the investigation is ongoing. A report will be ready in June. The Church is busy preparing for the All American Council, and he is hoping for peace before the All American Council. He said that the Church will have to take a deep spiritual breath to prepare for sacred councils, which are not secular meetings. His Grace will present a prayer for the Diocese to include in our personal prayers.

His Grace proposed and distributed a timetable for the Diocese for 2008 and 2009.

National Church business will occupy us but we still need to do Diocesan work. Perhaps 2009 will provide us with more time to focus and implement what we're talking about now. Education and mission will be the focus of our energy and our ideas and plans, but enthusiasm for these areas is important for the increase of these areas.

Communications need to be worked on.

The Diocesan web site will focus on education and mission, parish profiles, and calendars for parish events.

Liturgical texts are a source of attraction for people. Our theology is useful for everyone. The liturgy and fathers will be offered to people, and icons can be displayed to benefit everyone.

His Grace would like to have a public relations person for each deanery (not necessarily clergy) to better disseminate information.

His Grace proposes a diocesan or deanery event similar to Memorial Day for lectures, liturgics, open to the wide community to spread the word of Orthodox Christianity.

His Grace been in contact with the office of the new mayor of Philadelphia who says he will clean up crime.

There is need for us to have a Diocesan center. His Beatitude has expressed willingness to work with the Diocese on the legal status of the center.

One of the themes of the website will be the journey to Orthodox Christianity.

Please remember in your prayers Archpriest Eugene Pianovich, Priest Sergius Willis, Matushka Yuschak, Archpriest Michael Lepa, Metropolitan THEODOSIUS.

### **Diocesan Chancellor's Report**

Father Kowalczyk said due to tragedy in Father Soucek's life, the Diocese Alive in Christ magazine will be postponed. There was a discussion on the cost and cost reduction of the magazine.

The census overview is 3239 adults, 800 children, so 4039 in the diocesan family. Some parishes showed increases, some showed losses, mainly due to funerals.

The schedule for Mission Vespers has been sent out, thanks to His Grace.

### **Diocesan Treasurer's Report**

Father Browne spoke of a new accountant, Paul Berdy, of K.K.B. They are providing good support and are making corrections and improvements. There will be quarterly audits, There is \$37100+ in checking account. Pensions payments for the diocese were merged with seminary payments. Diocesan pensions contributions are no longer possible with the new methods.

Father Martin Browne presented his report for income and expenses in the Diocese.

Last year, expenses for the Diocesan Center exceeded income by \$4000.00.

Parishes must return invoices when they make payments. Checks are to be made out to the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania.

Father Udics made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report subject to audit, seconded by Mary Sernak. The motion passed.

Father Kovalak moved to hire K.K.B., seconded by Father Hojnicki, it passed.

### **Metropolitan Council Representatives' Report**

The next meeting of the Metropolitan Council will be from March 31 to April 2.

### **New Business**

Father Daniel Kovalak attended a conference on <sup>natural</sup> National Church development. They talked about a high percentage of growth in "Church smarts," and the "Science" of growth, They wanted to Orthodoxize their content. His Grace will go to the next meeting.

Father Kovalak made the following motion: The Diocesan Council strongly recommends to the Diocesan Hierarchy that the competent authorities cap the currently burdensome national assessment at a rate substantially lower than present, in order to promote growth. Seconded by Marie Proch. Passed.

Father Hojnicki made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Father Udics. The motion passed and His Grace adjourned the meeting at 3:48 pm with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Archpriest John Udics, Diocesan Council Secretary