

Diocesan Council Meeting  
August 19, 2014  
Christ the Savior, Harrisburg

**Present:** Bishop Mark, Fr. Kowalczyk, Fr. Hatrak, Fr. Solak, Fr. Weremedic, Fr. Hojnicki, Fr. Schellbach, Fr. Vernak, John Buckeye, Mark Linnehan, Doug Yates, Elsie Herman, David Yeosock, Pdn Sergei Kapral

**Absent:** Fr. Gorodenchuk

Began at 10:05 with singing of *O Heavenly King*

At the bishop's request, Fr. Weremedic gave a report on the health of his son, James.

His Grace mentioned his desire to keep clergy informed about illnesses but also respect privacy.

#### **Minutes of previous meeting.**

Fr. Weremedic said it should be included That we entered into executive session.

David Yeosock – 2<sup>nd</sup> Fr. Michael Hatrak

Motion passed

#### **Bishop's Report**

Discussion on Bishop's travel to parishes – support staff, possibility of weekend visitations so as to meet with the breath of the parish in its component parts. **His Grace said he would ask Rector's to consider visitations in 2015 for the weekend with a schedule of meetings with different groups in the parish.**

Development of parish mission statement

Meeting in Lykens: Fr. Hatrak, Fr. Hojnicki, Mark Linnehan

- Very positive meeting
- They desire to continue, want to have regular schedule
- Talked about cemetery and eventuality of closing.
  - Perpetual care, care of buildings.
- Fr. Timothy spoke of how the bishop's approach was responsible for the positive tone which he heard subsequently from parishioners. Invited the group to sit together at the same table, invited them to speak.
- Discussion on the positives in the parish and previous history

#### Background Checks

- Only 7 priests have submitted background checks
- Bishop spoke with Met. Tikhon, Fr. Tosi and Cindy Davis about clarification of level of check which led to most recent clarification from Holy Synod.

Discussion of compliance:

- Issues related to retired clergy- who pays for the background checks.

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- Requirement of substitutes to have background check
- Visiting clergy supervised by Rector
- Letter from Bishop Mark regarding substitutes having required background checks.
- Calls regarding clergy compliance with latest

### **Diocesan Property**

Spoke with Met. Tikhon following the last meeting

Followed up

- Each entity have own attorney
- We have attorney from Mechanicsburg meeting with John Krisa on September 2nd
- Following up with Fr. Jillions weekly
  - Numerous transfers of property without being properly executed
  - Done unilaterally by then ruling bishop without consent of the boards
  - Call Fr. Jillions for a copy of appraisal
  - Contact Mickey Herzak as to what the certified appraisal is and ask if they are interested in going further regarding purchase of our interest in the house.
  - Motion Fr. Solak, Fr. Weremedic
  - Carried

### **Proposed Diocesan By-Laws**

- Regarding the Diocesan Assembly – should we enforce the proposed provisions now before approved
- Proposed Diocesan Laws on website immediately, ask for input
- Fr. James Weremedic spoke of Statute Revision review possibly causing confusion if discussed at the Diocesan Assembly. Maybe defer the Diocesan By-Laws for another year. His Grace will call Abp. Nathaniel to see if proposed changes can be posted sooner rather than later.
- Discussion followed
- Mark Linnehan proposed some corrections
  - Commonwealth from State
  - Eastern Pennsylvania and Delaware from Eastern Pennsylvania
  - Competence of DA –

### **Parish By-Laws**

Proposed uniform set, offered to parishes who are working on updating or writing

Taken substantially from Mechanicsburg.

Letters of Transfer – is this what Bishop Mark wants? Reasonable form (email, documented telephone call) of communication between the two Rectors.

### **Chancellor's Report**

- Pamphlet Rack: Bishop advised. In five weeks emptied.
- Reflects insight of Bishop – reason to pay attention to his suggestions.
- Spiritual Court on August 26 in Stroudsburg for Archpriest Theodore Heckman
- Communication with the deans, esp. Fr. Solak
- Telephone communication with the bishop every other day, present in Diocesan Center on one day a week.
- Continuing Education – good for clergy. Personal healing – parish healing is furthered by these.
- Meetings with clergy on behalf of the bishop
- All American Council in Atlanta – Role of Bishop Mark, Letter from Melanie Ringa regarding the assessment.
- Mark Linnehan questioned about the rate of participation in Continuing Ed for Clergy. Fr. Kowalczyk indicated 65% participation rate, Mark said this is not success. Need to develop metrics. Offered his assistance.
- Having meetings for accountability – has it changed behavior. Begun the process. Need to measure progress.

### **Treasurer's Report**

- Fr. Raymond presented his report. He suggested to build a budget which we need for the coming years.
- Fr. Victor was working with the Catholic Archdiocese for their closed rectories as a possible headquarters for our Diocesan Bishop.
- Depreciation on the house:
  - Not done previously for various reasons.
- Seminarian scholarships
  - Who is that going to?
- Mark Linnehan asked for a Cash Flow statement to be added to the reports.
- There is a plan to switch the accounts to PNC from Penn Star due to logistics and access.
- Fr. Solak says that to give better feedback as to what we need to fund as a diocese, we need a better mission and sense of vision for the diocese.
  - Priorities going forward?
  - Suggestions to be forwarded to Fr. Raymond ASAP.
- Issue for the following year: the projection going forward could have us giving to Syosset more than 10%
- Motion to accept Fr. Michael Hatrak, Seconded by Fr. Fr. Weremedic UNANIMOUS APPROVAL

### **Wilkes-Barre Deanery**

- One meeting at Food Pantry in Scranton run by Michael Pasonick

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- Fr. Michael Markewich left diocese
- Uniondale, Dundaff, Alden Station, Nanticoke, Lopez without permanent assigned
- One substitute arranges to donate his receipts
- New priests in the deanery are working.
- Bishop praised his work

**Frackville**

- Lykens covered
- Annual Clergy family picnic in Minersville – Bishop there, well attended.
- Fr. Ignatius in Coaldale
- Fr. Theophan on loan from Ukrainians in Mt. Carmel
- McAdoo working on bylaws and incorporation
- Thanked Fr. Tim for his support
- Holy Apostles Mission waiting for the banks to get back to them. Started site work on the property. Hoping to hear back in the next week and go to parish meeting. If all goes well will be in new building in late Winter.

**Philadelphia**

- Deanery outing to Camden Sharks
- Clergy picnic August 31
- Investigating a mission in Collegeville area, Fr. Jason, Fr. Victor and Fr. James met. Fr. Peter Skoog the lead person in the area
- Fr. Sergius Willis passed away. Memory Eternal!
- Fr. James Weremedic expressed his thanks for all their prayers, well wishes and support.

**Revitalization**

- Fr. Timothy offers to come to parishes to present a parish growth presentation. Since the last meeting presentations have been offered at St. Stephen's Cathedral, Philadelphia and All Saints, Olyphant. An invitation was extended to visit the Archdiocese of Pittsburgh and present at St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, Allison Park.
- The website needs to update the revitalization tab with articles on Stewardship and possibly some short surveys from the PHIM
- Parish Council Workshops:
  - Do one in each deanery
  - Fr. James Weremedic and Mark will work on one for Philadelphia Deanery

**Liturgical Life**

- A conference call was held. Focus is being given to the Funeral Service and the Panikhida service.
- The hope is to produce books within the diocese for these services to help organize us better.

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- Abbreviated Matins Service with Resurrection Gospel for use on Sunday mornings
- Fr. Stephen Vernak shared his resources with Fr. Victor.
- Bishop not opposed to Vesperral Liturgy for feasts if it better serves the people.

### **Metropolitan Council**

- David Yeosock on Financial Committee. 142 members of Stewards of O.C.A.
- F.O.C.A going to support the Stewards. Getting support.
- Met. Council is 100% on board.
- Thaddeus Wojick stepped down to move to California. Judge Lanier, Greg Nescott, Cindy Davis.
- Chancellor not as involved in ORSMA now that Cindy is.
- Revisiting the F.O.S. list in addition to building new lists
- Movement of the archives. Serge Trubetskoy, Alex Liberovsky and other librarians and archivists

### **Communications and Website**

- Look at the Diocese of the West. Suggest for ours based on it.
- Podcasts, presentations, sermons, etc.
- Aric prepare a written report.

### **St. Tikhon's Summer Camp – Fr. Timothy**

- 46<sup>th</sup> year
- For past three years new people involved
- 135 kids from all over
- Good organization
  - Tee shirt identification
  - Background checks
- Smoother as years go by
- Martin Paluch received a Diocesan Gramota in thanks for all he has done for the camp from the beginning.

### **New Business**

#### **Continuing Ed**

Dr. Stephen Muse from Columbus Georgia. Did a retreat for the Holy Synod in Ottawa, talked about accountability. October 10 in Wilkes – Barre area.

Fr. Dan Daly was RC priest in Africa for 20 years, Orthodox for 25 years. Did presentation on preaching for Antiochian symposium. Two presentations in Fall. In Philadelphia (St. Stephen's) on Sept 29 at 10am

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**Diocesan Assembly**

January 29 to 30 in Bethlehem

**Diocesan Council**

November 18<sup>th</sup> next meeting.

Closed at 4:10 with the singing of It is Truly Meet.

Respectfully submitted,

Priest Raymond Martin Browne

Diocesan Council Secretary

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