

October 11, 1976 # 151

Confirmed

+ Archbishop Kiprian

MINUTES OF THE DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY

The Annual Assembly of the Diocese of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania of the Orthodox Church in America was held on Saturday, 25 September 1976, at St. Tikhon's Monastery and Seminary, South Canaan, Pennsylvania.

Following a Divine Liturgy in the Monastery Church served by His Grace, Bishop Herman, the delegates assembled in the Seminary auditorium after registration and the distribution of reports and papers.

His Eminence, Archbishop Kiprian opened the Assembly after the singing of "O Heavenly King" at 10:35 a.m. and then transferred the Chair to His Grace, Bishop Herman.

The registration record of the delegates and Diocesan Council members in attendance is attached to these minutes and made a part thereof. The number of participants at the morning session was as follows:

2 Bishops  
28 Clergy  
23 Lay Delegates  
9 Guests  
4 Diocesan Council Members  
65 TOTAL IN ATTENDANCE

Fr. Daniel Donlick, Secretary of the Diocese, opened the elections for the offices of Vice-presidents and Secretaries for the Assembly with the following individuals being elected to the indicated offices:

Fr. Vladimir S. Borichevsky, Clergy Vice-president  
Mr. Stephen Kopestonsky, Lay Vice-president  
Fr. John Matusiak, Clergy Secretary  
Mrs. Suzanne Janos, Lay Secretary

The Agenda was approved as read, with the addition of the following items: a.) Fr. Alexander Fedoronko requested a clarification on the situation of the Patriarchal parishes and the Orthodox Church in America. This will be brought up in the Archbishop's report; b.) Russell Tatusko, Bethlehem, requested that information concerning the All-American Council in Montreal be made available under new business; c.) William Conco, Baltimore, raised the issue of clergy salaries, pensions and raises, to be brought up under new business; d.) Fr. Daniel Ressetar, Harrisburg, asked that the possibility of organizing a Diocesan Choir be brought up under new business; e.) Daniel Jones, Old Forge, brought up the question of a standardization of liturgical rites, to be discussed under new business.

The Minutes of the last Diocesan Assembly, held on 6 Sept. 1975, were read. Daniel Ziaya, Jermyn, asked that the reference to the All-American Council in terms of "biannual" and "triannual" be changed to "biennial" and "triennial." Fr. George Pawlush, Holy Trinity, Wilkes-Barre, motioned that the minutes be accepted as corrected, seconded by Fr. Joseph Gallick, Alden Station, and unanimously accepted.

The written report of Archbishop Kiprian is attached to these minutes and made a part thereof. His Eminence, in response to the request of Fr. Fedoronko, explained the relations between the Moscow Patriarchate's parishes in the United States and the Orthodox Church in America. Having noted the history of the agreement on autocephaly, His Eminence noted certain irregularities on the part of the Patriarchal administration in this country under Bishops Makary and Job. His Eminence reported that a new Vicar has been appointed, Bishop Ireney, but has not yet arrived.

The report of the Secretary of the Diocesan Council, Fr. Daniel Donlick, Jermyn, was read and unanimously accepted upon motion by Mr. Don Motel, Morton, seconded by Fr. John Matusiak, Shillington, and is attached to these minutes and made a part thereof.

The report of the Diocesan Treasurer, Fr. Paul Ropitsky, was read and is attached to these minutes and made a part thereof. Daniel Ziaya, Jermyn, noted that on the page which listed the 1975 Diocesan Assessment payments to the National Church that a correction should be made showing \$51,106.77 rather than \$551,106.77. The Auditors, Fr. Vladimir Petorak, Jerry Russin and Michael Yeosock made their report, which is attached to these minutes and made a part thereof. Fr. John Chupeck, Old Forge, motioned to accept the Treasurer's and Auditor's reports, seconded by Russell Tatusko, and unanimously passed.

His Grace, Bishop Herman, presented a report on the Department of Missions, noting that Doylestown was still a mission parish, and that plans are being made to begin a Mission in Pocono-Stroudsburg area. Randy Freudig, St. Mark's Mission at Doylestown, reported on the growth of that mission. Fr. Donlick asked how long St. Mark's would remain a mission, to which Mr. Freudig responded one to two more years. Fr. Fedoronko asked the number of parishioners in Doylestown, which Mr. Freudig listed as 35 members. Mr. Don Motel, Morton, reported that his parish was no longer a Mission, and expressed his thanks to the Diocese for their support.

Fr. John Matusiak, Director of the Diocesan Education Department, gave that Department's report, which is attached to these minutes and made a part thereof. Fr. Matusiak noted that the Department's publication, CHURCH AND HOME, has been increased from 1000 to 2000 copies, and he asked that all delegates fill in the form which was distributed earlier as to the number of copies their parish desires.

Fr. Rodion Kondratick, Director of Special Collections, reported on the special funds collections, noting that the results of these collections were in the Treasurer's report and that unfortunately many parishes did not comply.

Russell Dugan, Director of the Diocesan Insurance Department, presented a report for the Department which is attached to these minutes and made a part thereof.

#### OLD BUSINESS

Diocesan Census: Fr. Daniel Donlick reported that there was 90% cooperation with the last Diocesan census, yet only 75% of the figures sent in appeared to be accurate. He reported on parish size, noting that the Diocese can only function effectively if it has a true picture of its size. Fr. Gallick and Mr. Tatusko stressed the need

for an accurate census. Bishop Herman noted that the first call for a census was made by the Metropolitan Council. He strongly emphasized the need for accuracy. Fr. Donlick commented that various methods were used to obtain accurate figures for certain parishes, yet they were not always successful.

William Conco outlined the past actions of the Diocesan Assembly concerning clergy salaries and cost of living adjustments, stressing that this need to be reviewed yearly at the Assembly. Bishop Herman noted that parishes are annually reminded to review their pastor's salaries at the annual parish meetings. Following discussion by Mr. Conco, Fr. Michael Romanchak, and Mr. Peter Truskowsky, Don Motel suggested that guidelines be published concerning clerical salaries and raises. Following lengthy discussion by Bishop Herman, Fr. Vladimir Borichevsky, Mr. Conco, Fr. Romanchak, and Miss Patricia Stetz, Mr. Don Motel made the following motion, seconded by Mr. Randy Freudig:

I move that the Diocese create guidelines for the compensation of a parish priest, these guidelines to represent minimum compensation and to be based on tenure as a priest, size of parish, and geographical differences. Further, that these guidelines be transmitted to the National Church as the recommendation of the Diocese of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania for eventual publication as National guidelines. Questions on the motion were raised by Frs. John Kuchta and Vladimir Borichevsky and Mr. Wansuch. In the resulting vote, there were 39 in favor of the motion, 8 opposed, with 2 abstentions. Motion passed.

Prior to the adjournment for lunch, individual Deanery reports were given. They are attached to these minutes and made a part thereof.

The Diocesan Assembly adjourned for lunch at 12:45 p.m. and reconvened at 1:55 p.m.

Mr. Kopestonsky asked for the report of the Nominating committee. Fr. Claude Vinyard, Chairman, made the following nominations for the Diocesan Council:

From the Wilkes-Barre Deanery: Fr. Pawlush and Mr. Russell Dugan, seconded by Fr. Joseph Gallick;

From the Frackville Deanery: Fr. Joseph Martin and Mr. Michael Kurtz, seconded by Fr. Rodion Kondratick;

From the Philadelphia Deanery: Fr. Nestor Geeza and Mr. Don Motel, seconded by Mr. William Conco;

Delegates at Large: Fr. Borichevsky and Mr. Stephen Kopestonaky, seconded by Mr. Peter Truskowski. Fr. Borichevsky declined. Mr. Peter Truskowski nominated Fr. Rodion Kondratick.

Auditors: Fr. Michael Hatrak, Mr. Jerry Russin and Mr. Peter Truskowski.

Russell Tatusko motioned to accept these candidates, seconded by Mr. Swantko, and unanimously passed.

Bishop Herman reported that in general the Diocese has done well in their financial commitments to the National Church. Fr. Joseph Martin presented the budget for 1977. Mr. William Conco stated that he felt that the \$2.00 assessment was not enough and that it should be raised to \$5.00. Discussion on this would be transferred to Diocesan Aims and Objectives. Fr. Joseph Martin stated that the Budget Committee does not feel that a raise in the assessment was necessary at this time. Fr. George Pawlush motioned to accept the budget as presented, seconded by Mr. Russell Dugan. Motion passed with one opposed.

Introducing the topic of Diocesan Aims and Objectives, Bishop Herman noted that extra income was necessary if further programs were to be initiated. While we are the third most active Diocese in contributing to the National Church, we are the most behind in our Diocesan programs. His Grace cited several reasons why the Diocese must seek out new programs, finally suggesting that the possibility of a multi-purpose pavillion be constructed, that a Diocesan Day be instituted, or that an Awards Dinner for laymen be scheduled. The request for a facility for the aged, or an "Orthodox Village," should also be investigated. Mr. Stephen Kopestonsky presented a list of his ideas for Diocesan programs. Discussion ensued with Mr. Swantko, Mr. Conco, Mr. Fellegrini, Mr. Tatusko, Mrs. Janos, and Frs. Matusiak and Donlick, expressing various ideas for programs which favorably view the pavillion construction on the Monastery-Seminary grounds. Fr. Donlick motioned that we go on record to propose construction of a building-pavillion for all activities as our Diocesan Goal, seconded by Mr. Russell Tatusko. On the motion, Mr. Swantko asked what the building will look like. Bishop Herman noted that two sketches have already been drawn up, with a preliminary construction cost of approximately \$68,000. As far as the use of the building itself, the Diocesan Department heads would be consulted. Fr. John Sorochka, Mayfield, expressed his desire to see a two year time limit on this project. Further discussion was led by Frs. Joseph Gallick, Alexander Fedoronko, Michael Romanchak, and Vladimir Borichevsky, and Mr. Conco and Mr. Serafin. A vote was taken with 33 in favor of the motion, 2 opposed and 6 abstentions. Fr. Alexander Fedoronko requested that he go on record in the minutes as abstaining. Concerning the Diocesan Day, Fr. Daniel Donlick suggested that the Diocesan Council discuss and plan this event.

Fr. Daniel Donlick noted that the Diocese was in need of an IBM typewriter. To date, he has had to use his own equipment, and that in a recent accident, hsi typewriter was damaged and in need of \$60.00 worth of repairs, which he himself paid for. Fr. Vladimir Petorak motioned that the Diocese purchase an IBM Selectric II typewriter, seconded by Mr. Jerry Russin, and unanimously passed.

Fr. Daniel Ressetar raised the idea of a Diocesan Choir. His Eminence, Archbishop Kiprian, appointed Fr. Ressetar to organize a Diocesan Choir. Mr. Stephen Kopestonsky was also appointed by the Archbishop to be the Director of Public Relations and Publicity for the Diocese, since he expressed concern for a need in this area. Upon a motion by Daniel Ziaya and seconded by Fr. John Sorochka, a committee to study the feasibility of an "Orthodox Village" was to be created and requested to report their findings to the next Diocesan Assembly.

At this point, thanks were expressed on behalf of the Diocese to Fr. Daniel Donlick for his work in preparing such detailed reports, and to Fr. John Matusiak for his work in publishing the Diocesan Education Department's journal, CHURCH AND HOME. Fr. Vladimir Borichevsky presented the work of his radio program, and asked for everyone's support in promoting this project. Dan Jones brought up the issue of standardized liturgical services, to which Fr. Joseph Martin noted that this is within the competency of the Department of Liturgics of the National Church.

Mrs. Suzanne Janos noted that the issue of raising the assessment has been delayed several times during this Assembly. Mr. Conco motioned that the assessment be raised from \$2.00 to \$5.00, seconded by Mrs. Janos. On the motion, Fr. Alexander Fedoronko expressed his opinion that the increase is 'shocking.' In the vote, there were 3 in favor and 46 opposed. Mr. Conco motioned that the Diocesan assessment be raised from \$2.00 to \$3.00, seconded by Mr. Motel. In the vote, there were 12 in favor and 37 opposed. Both motions were defeated.

Fr. Alexander Fedoronko again expressed that he feels nothing is being done to remedy the situation between the Patriarchal parishes and the Orthodox Church in America. Archbishop Kiprian, as Head of the National Church's Department of External Affairs, assured the Assembly that that Department was doing everything possible to regularize the matter. Bishop Herman expressed the same attitude. Mr. Russell Tatusko spoke on the forthcoming All-American Council, to be held in 1977 in Montreal, strongly suggesting that delegations be prepared well in advance for this Council.

Fr. Donlick spoke about the schedule for the 1977 Diocesan Assembly, suggesting that it begin with the participation of all delegates in the Divine Liturgy. The proposed date is 24 September 1977. Concerning the final decision as to the place and date, Fr. John Chupeck motioned that the Diocesan Council decide these two items, seconded by Fr. Joseph Gallick, and unanimously passed.

Concerning resolutions for the All-American Council on behalf of the Diocesan Assembly, Fr. Joseph Martin noted that they must be submitted to the Pre-Conciliar Commission at least 90 days prior to the All-American Council.

The Assembly unanimously motioned that the Seminary and Monastery be thanked for the use of their facilities for the Assembly.

Fr. George Pawlush motioned that the Assembly be closed, seconded by Fr. Joseph Martin, and unanimously approved. The Assembly closed at 4:25 p.m. with the singing of "It is truly meet."

Respectfully submitted,

Priest John Matusiak, Clergy Secretary

Mrs. Suzanne Janos, Lay Secretary