

The meeting began at 10:30am with the singing of *Christ is Risen!*

Present: Bishop Melchisedek, Bishop Mark, Fr. Kowalczyk, Fr. Browne, Fr. Hatrak, Fr. Weremedic, Fr. Solak, Fr. Hojnicky, Fr. Mathewson, Elsie Herman, Mark Linnehan, David Yeosock, Protodeacon Sergei Kapral.

Absent: John Buckeye, Doug Yates, Fr. Fetcho.

Minutes of the previous meeting:

Report of Bishop Melchisedek

- Has been in the diocese to visit parishes in need of clergy. 8 vacancies, in the process of trying to fill larger ones. As of yesterday, (May 12) Bethlehem – Fr. Joseph McCartney.
- All Saints in Olyphant, St. John's in Edwardsville, three small parishes in Dundaff, Simpson, Uniondale.
- Looking to sponsor priest for future assignment, Fr. George Volkovinsky, from Byelorussia, in country (Cleveland) but in process for acquiring a residence permit.
- On hand for consultation with Bp. Mark, dealing with pastoral issues.

Report of Bishop Mark

Filling vacancies in Olyphant and Bethlehem

Visits to parishes during Lent for Presanctifieds and Holy Week services.

Financial Practices

- Have deanery meetings. Fr. Weremedic has scheduled for June 15. Some push back, unease. Need to put parishes at ease in making transparency universal in the church.
- Anticipate the other two deaneries will schedule meetings soon.

Teleconference for revitalization on April 4th

- Fr. Tim has heard about that.
- Deans will follow up on reports not sent

Census report from 1975: over ten years 50% decline between 2000-10

- Next census include age of current parishioners

Maintenance at Diocesan Center

- No window units for air conditioning
- Baseboard heating which is very expensive
- Bids for central heat.
- Replace air conditioning
 - Recommendation of commercial heat/air heat pump

- Get estimates for heat pumps and gas furnace – natural gas storage.
- Cleaning of windows
- Outside gutters in need of repair
- Roof

David Yeosock presented the subdivision of the Orphanage property as approved by Wayne County. This includes the 1.93 acres of the Diocesan Center.

Chancellor' Report

- Clergy Substitutes
 - Fr. Benjamin Huggins going to Diocese of the West upon graduation.
 - Fr. Marty Watt leaving diocese.
 - Fr. Matthew Markewich in Uniondale, but under Bp. Michael and will be assigned in August in New York/New Jersey Diocese.
 - Fr. John Malcolm in Nanticoke leaving in November for service in Afghanistan.
- Clergy Retreat at St. Vladimir's Seminary
 - Need for clergy revitalization
 - Good reception
 - Need for clergy to think of new ways to come into Eastern Pennsylvania
 - We need to be out there, promote the diocese.
- Two priests from St. Vladimir's for Holy Week
 - Fr. Benedict Churchill – to Lopez
 - Fr. James Parnell – Simpson
- Need to encourage younger ones
- Episcopal Search Committee – Agia Sophia Coffee House April 4th
 - Reviewed highlights of the meeting
 - Minutes sent to the *Locum Tenens*
 - 3 questions developed to present to possible candidates.
 - Came up with 17 candidates and submitted to Bp. Melchisedek for review for synodal approval.
 - Another meeting after Bishop Melchisedek responds to us.
- Thanked bishops for presence at Lenten Services and process for securing priest for vacant parishes.
- Bishop Mark had Bridegroom Matins at Holy Resurrection Cathedral, large crowd for a first time.

Mark Linnehan Question

- Derogatory remarks made about particular group of candidates at the meeting; were we going to exclude them as indicated by silence in response to the remark made by member of Search Committee.
- Bishop Melchisedek will present the list to the Lesser Synod at the meeting this month. Remarked on the list in general terms without addressing specific names.

- Only two bishops have reviewed the list
- Names might be added by Holy Synod to the list submitted
- We are waiting for response from Holy Synod.
- Fr. Victor question about the path ahead
 - Bishop Melchisedek said we are in conversation with the Holy Synod which we should not have to be in if there was a preapproved list, but there is not such a list at this time. So we are involved in the conversation.
- Fr. Hatrak question about chronological relationship to other vacant dioceses
 - Bishop Melchisedek says will not be filled on chronological basis.
- Mark Linnehan questions
 - If it was predictable who would have been at St. Vladimir's then why not take another approach.
 - Repeated experience of gatherings with same people not there.

Treasurer's Report

- Expenditures
 - Bishops travel expenses
 - Agreement for bids for work at Diocesan Center
 - Requests:
 - Fr. Martin proposed for a house cleaner for Diocesan Center
 - David Yeosock so moves
 - Fr. Michael Hatrak 2nd - UNANIMOUS
 - Fr. Martin presented the need for ground maintenance
 - To be approved by Diocesan center maintenance
 - Summer Camp
 - Fr. Martin recommends they keep their own books and be audited themselves. Practically it is hard to have it split in 3 places. Give the camp program control of its own financial dealings.
 - Fr. Nicholas Solak so moved
 - Fr. Michael Hatrak seconded – UNANIMOUS approval
- LUNCH BREAK
- Fr. James Weremedic moved to approve the financial reports, subject to audit
- Seconded by Fr. Daniel Mathewson - UNANIMOUS approval

Audit

- Quarterly audit given by Fr. Sergei Kapral
- Most complex one so far, lots of paper to go through.
- Everything is in order.
- Will check the talent survey for possible candidates for third auditor.
 - Put something on the website

Deans' Reports

Fr. Solak: Wilkes-Barre Deanery

- 16/37 parishes of diocese in the deanery (43% of parishes). 8 vacancies in WB deanery.
- Census 1290 adults located in the deanery, 45% of diocese.
- Filled with retired clergy, seminary related clergy.
- Temporary fix
- Not doing the pastoral work needed to know what to do.

Fr. Hatrak: Frackville Deanery

- Thank Bp. Mark for visiting twice and Fr. Tosi
- Fr. John Onofrey slowly recuperating, served Pascha and after
- Deacon Seraphim had surgery and recuperating
- Collected \$856 at Lenten Services for mission trip to Philadelphia
- June meeting with bishop re financials
- Harrisburg anniversary this weekend
- Lykens in October
- Recurring problem over past 2-3 years
 - Fr. John Tokarick
 - Seek clarification from ROCOR
 - Bishop will send the deans a directive regarding this issue

Fr. Weremedic: Philadelphia Deanery

- Four services as a deanery Gradyville, Pottstown, St. Stephen's Cathedral, integrated with the Clergy Brotherhood
- Sunday of Orthodoxy with Bishop Mark
- Bethlehem offer made
- Catasauqua – covered
- Coatesville – waiting for Fr. Miller to move
- Planning an altar servers retreat late July/August
- Mission Trip to St. Mary's in July

When clergy coming into the diocese from

- Another jurisdiction – psychological testing
- Different diocese – personnel file, no psych testing if functioning normally

Metropolitan Council

- David Yeosock and Fr. James Weremedic, orientation
- Legal team spot on

- Stewards of OCA donation from MC collected \$24,000.
 - o Appeal is forthcoming
 - o Make up the difference in the interim due to transition to proportional giving

Good relationship with Metropolitan Tikhon – aware of issues, listening, cooperative.

Revitalization: Bishop Mark

- Conference call April 4
 - o Different opinions
 - o PHIM/stewardship/monthly progress report
- Some push back
 - o Alternatives
- What to do with non-compliance on a deanery level
- Discussion on monthly reporting

Communications: Aric Gingo

- Graduation photos, deadline is July 28
 - o Strict deadline
 - o High res pic, grad name, parents, school, future plans
- Website
 - o Continues to grow
 - o Page views trending upwards 30000 for year
- Revitalization part of every issue
 - o Specifics
 - o Need formation
 - o Educate people
 - o Hit different parts of revitalization
 - o Needs input
- Next issue typically end of this month, late May early June. Pascha issue
- Next issue after that in August.
- Paypal account on website
 - o Set up for monetary donation for mission
- Revamp website – ongoing
 - o Rotate the look for different feast days

Liturgical Life – Fr. Vladimir unable to attend

Mission Trip: Fr. Daniel Mathewson

- 25 at meeting at end of March at Holy Trinity
 - o Others volunteering for part time service
 - o Regular contact with Fr. Matthew Cantrell
 - Getting prepared

- House those who are staying, provide evening meals
- Visited with contractors, found roof leaking problems and can fix
- Material lists closer to the time
- Main goal is fundraising for individuals going
- Feeling from parishioners at Assumption of the Holy Virgin is excitement
 - Diocese is coming to help us
 - Pulling them together
- Orthodox Philly.com giving coverage
- Pick one day during the week that is outreach oriented.
- Ask MT to come for DL on July 21, if not then Bishop Mark or Bishop Melchisedek

By Laws: Fr. Timothy Hojnicky

- South working on theirs, New England, Pittsburgh working on theirs, others online
- West, Midwest, Bulgarian online
- Standard parish bylaws
- Bishop Melchisedek recommended we have a draft for new bishop to review. We do. Draft we completed requires episcopal review.

Old Business: None

New Business:

- Request bishop to assign building maintenance of Chancery responsibility of chancellor to form subcommittee made by Mark Linnehan.
- Wives retreat June 9 in Harrisburg with Dr. Al. Rossi
- Seminar on Bipolar/schizoid disorders August 3rd in Coaldale
- Continuing Ed in Fall
 - Anthony Bashir – long term planning
 - **Hinshaws – death and dying process**

Next meeting August 12: Mechanicsburg 10AM

Meeting Closed at 3:15pm with singing of *“Shine, Shine O New Jerusalem”*

Respectfully submitted

Priest Raymond Martin Browne

Council Secretary