

Present: Bishop Melchisedek, Bishop Mark, Fr. John Kowalczyk, Fr. Michael Hatrak, Fr. Nicholas Solak, Fr. James Weremedic, Fr. Timothy Hojnicky, Fr. Daniel Mathewson, Fr. Victor Gorodenchuk, Fr. Martin Browne, Elsie Herman, Doug Yates, Mark Linnehan. Absent: John Buckeye,

Opening Prayer 10:17 O Heavenly King

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Minutes of May 13, 2013 Meeting

Mark Linnehan proposed correcting the statement regarding episcopal search committee to include that we do not intend to exclude any group for consideration. All agreed.

Motion to accept – Fr. Hatrak, Fr. Matthewson.

All in favor

Report of Locum Tenens – Bishop Melchisedek

- Review process trying to set in motion – degree of success questionable
- All eligible candidates in the OCA, eliminate any unacceptable for any reason. Not talking about canonical prohibitions.
- Once we had a list of people we could work with, try to involve them in positions of higher administration so HS could get to know them, observe administrative and interpersonal skills.
- Process has not come along very far.
- Last Synod meeting interviewed a few people without conclusion for various reasons. Some bishops have not trimmed the list. A few have, so there is a shorter list, though not short enough nor examined sufficiently.
- As of now one definite candidate, Bishop Mark. Whether any others, remains to be seen.
- HS has had other issues that have demanded their attention, hopefully better situated to deal with the issue now that these have been dealt with.
- Bishop Melchisedek is trying to push it but the wheels are moving slowly. His own diocese is not happy with the situation either.
- Bishop Mark has made a huge difference in making the administration of the diocese effective. Bishop Melchisedek expressed his gratitude for Bishop Mark's work.
- Parish vacancies. Filling slowly, possibility of consolidation or consolidation of administration of various parishes due to lack of candidates and the expectations of parishes.
- For the rest, diocese running reasonably smoothly.

Report of Diocesan Administrator – Bishop Mark

Parish Vacancies

- Filled two, Lopez with Fr. Hendershot and Bethlehem with Fr. Shipley

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- Vetting for 4 parishes, 6 candidates through these parishes in W-B deanery
- Fr. Michael Evans retiring at the end of October
- The parish compensation package and benefits are presented to the priest, and he has the option to decline or accept as part of the process
- Actively and aggressively trying to fill these

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Best Practices – Financial Practices

- Went with Fr. Martin Browne to each deanery. Well received. 70% responded

Revitalization – Monthly Progress reports

Coming in for the most part. Letters sent to those not responding

Areas not filled in, typically adult and other education and anything other than Sunday worship.

Parishes in decline have no education, nothing other than Sunday. Education needs to be part of ongoing parish ministry.

One's not sending reports are typically without a parish priest.

Maintenance of Diocesan Center – Heat, A/C, Grounds

Replaced heat/a/c, Bishop trimmed bushes. Guttering repaired, roof repaired. Ceiling repainted where water damage.

Chancellor's Report and Episcopal Search – Fr. John Kowalczyk

Thanked hierarchs for their work.

Discussed process in filling vacant parishes.

Extremely optimistic about life of diocese

Priest's interested in joining our diocese

Episcopal Search Committee – letters from parishes

Met April 23rd at Hagia Sophia in Harrisburg

List of 17 candidates sent to Bishop Melchisedek

Working to get responses from Holy Synod regarding the list.

Then we can approach potential candidates to see if they are willing to be considered as candidates

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Two positions currently among the clergy – we have a candidate and we need to see the process through.

Fr. Victor: frustration over the process. What is the process that the committee is functioning under?

Qualifications: Good admin, pastoral skills, knowledge of diocese and traditional soundness.

Discussion followed over the process and how it has evolved so far. It was clarified that the actions of the committee are subject to the directive of the Holy Synod and its attempts to formulate and implement a process for identifying and vetting candidates acceptable to them for consideration by vacant dioceses.

Motion to direct the committee to reduce the list to no more than three candidates by September 15th.
Fr. James Weremedic, Seconded by Fr. Timothy Hojnicky.

- Fr. Kowalczyk amend to October 1, seconded by Fr. Victor
- Motion carried as amended. One opposed.

Monthly Progress Reports

Fr. Hojnicky commented that he had received complaints from some senior clergy regarding the monthly progress reports, and Father John stated that the complaints could be directed to him. These reports are beneficial for the clergy as much as for the diocesan administration.

Renovation of the Diocesan Center.

Read a letter from Fr. Jillions regarding Bishop Mark's compensation.

Treasurer's Report – Fr. Martin Browne & Auditors

- Fr. Martin presented his report. It was previously sent out via email.
- Gregory Polk responded to an invitation to participate in the finance committee. With a blessing he was invited to participate with the next audit.
- There was not an audit done in the last quarter due to some health issues with the members.
- The repair work on the Diocesan Center was reported.

- Michelle Strelzyck was retained to clean the Diocesan Center. She is coming once a month to clean. It was not a budgeted expense, but was only \$75. It will be budgeted in the future.

- Fr. Martin reported on the outstanding debt of Alden Station and McAdoo. (see attached report).

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- Budget preparation: there are issues with stipends for diocesan officers. Should there be changes? Wait for the ruling bishop? Fr. Nick Solak brought up the additional health insurance for the officers, as well as the question of stipends for the deans.
- Fr. Martin presented a request from Gabriel Bilas to purchase a couch and chairs in the Diocesan Center basement.
- The only out-of-the-ordinary expenses since last meeting were the expense on the Diocesan Center.
- A discussion was brought up about the Diocesan Center. When we get title to it, we need to get it appraised. Fr. John K will contact those in authority to get the meeting to get this done.
- Fr. Michael Hatrak made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report, subject to audit. Seconded by Fr. Daniel Mathewson. UNANIMOUS approval.

Deanery Reports

Wilkes-Barre – Fr. Solak

- 7 parishes vacant.
- Fr. Dennis Hendershot transferred to diocese and attached to Lopez
- Dundaff and Uniondale be served by one priest
- Steps taken to bring Nanticoke and Alden Station under one priest.
- Six priests coming through, looking for parishes. None are seminary graduates.
- Altar server's retreat August 20 at Holy Trinity in W-B
- Deanery meeting September 12.
- Fr. Fetcho resigned from Diocesan Council and Liturgical Committee

Frackville – Fr. Hatrak

- Celebration in Lykens on Oct 6 100th Anniversary
- Shillington, Oct 20, 40th anniversary
- Oct 15, Mt. Carmel will have a retirement dinner for Fr. Evans
- Clergy Family Picnic in Minersville in July. Attended by Bp. Mark.
- Passing of Fr. Michael Kovach, Subdeacon Richard Hathaway

Philadelphia

- July 28 Deanery Meeting
 - o Fr. James Daugherty representing Fr. John Perich
 - o Welcomed Fr. Stephen Miller and Fr. Ian Shipley
 - o One parish served on part time basis.

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- Discussion on Episcopal Search
- Mission Service at AHV
- Social for Altar Servers
- Individual parishes work on this
- Vacation Bible School at St. Stephen's
- Clergy family picnic August 25 – 1:30pm
- 2014 Mission Services scheduled.
- Cathedral hosting Prison Ministry presentation on August 22 from 1-4pm.
- Mat. Mary Fedoronko reposed August 11th, service Friday/Saturday.

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Revitalization – Fr. Timothy

- Still getting push back
- Mechanicsburg has completed. Found it does what we say, identify issues to address.
- Fr. Martin spoke about reception in Pottstown, suggesting brainstorming to come up with ideas to offer parishes to breakthrough challenges.
- Ask for blurb on website on revitalization with information for contact Fr. Tim to schedule visits.

Liturgical Life – Fr. Fetcho

- Fr. Fetcho resigned.
- Need to appoint a successor. Has not met since last DC meeting because we do not have a Diocesan Bishop.

Communications/Website – Aric Gingo

- Fr. Tim Hojnicky commented on the website – updated frequently, great job.

Missions Trip - Fr. Mathewson presented a written report

- Accomplished more than expected, incredible response. Followed up with Fr. Matthew Cantrell. Very happy with what happened. Created a momentum in the parish for revitalization.
- Parish allocated 7500 for the project. 20-30 parishioners participated with the 17 members.
- Donated remaining funds for new sign.
- What next? Followup. Fr. Cantrell has contacted with Horticultural Society for community garden. FOCUS America in contact with them. Fr. Matthew has a vision for parish.
- Fr. Solak said FOCUS is very interested in this. Nick Chakos wants to come to our next Diocesan Council meeting. Schedule it at AHV.

Old Business

Need to have pool of possible people to serve on response teams who are both competent and available. No one currently working in law enforcement can serve. Law enforcement, mental health and clergy are preferred qualifications. Ideally they should be Orthodox, but don't have to be (non clergy).

New Business

Location for Diocesan Assembly

Invite Nicholas Chakos to give presentation on FOCUS Philadelphia. Have meeting at AHV in Philadelphia November 12th

Motion to close the meeting Fr. Tim, Fr. Hatrak.

Unanimously approved and meeting closed with singing of It is truly meet at 3:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Priest Raymond Martin Browne

Diocesan Council Secretary