

DIOCESAN COUNCIL MINUTES

DIOCESE OF THE WEST

March 14, 2017

His Eminence, Archbishop Benjamin convened a regular meeting of the Diocesan Council of the Diocese of the West at Holy Trinity Cathedral, San Francisco, CA, at 10:31 a.m. on Tuesday, March 14, 2017.

Present: Archbishop Benjamin, Bishop Daniel, Archpriest Ian MacKinnon, Archpriest Basil Rhodes, Archpriest John Pierce, Archpriest John Dresko, Archpriest Lawrence Russell, Archpriest Matthew Tate, Archpriest Stephen Soot, Archpriest Michael Anderson, Archpriest Lawrence Margitich, Archpriest Anthony Karbo, Archpriest Damian Kuolt, Priest Andrew Cuneo, Subdeacon Paul Pilipenko, Subdeacon Johan Morse, Mary Caetta, Dorothy Nowik, Lynnell Brunswig, David Lane (appointed to complete the term of Wesley Smith)

Absent: n/a

Guests: Archpriest David Lowell, Fr Andrew Smith, Fr. Theodore Svane, Hieromonk Innocent, Monk Barnabas (Day), Samir Fadel

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING – The minutes of the August 24, 2016 meeting of the Diocesan Council were accepted as previously distributed.

REPORT OF THE ARCHBISHOP – Abp. Benjamin gave his archpastoral report. Major points include: Archdeacon Kyrill to be ordained and assigned to Holy Trinity Cathedral. Mission Deanery, unique to the DOW, has a very important ministry and conducted an excellent Retreat this past month. Visitations to Seminaries have been conducted, to continue cultivating future priests. Archpriest Basil Rhodes just celebrated his 40-year anniversary of ordination to the Priesthood. In observance, all stood and sang Many Years to Fr. Basil. Coming consecration of the new temple at the Monastery of St. Barbara. Monastery of Holy Assumption has developed to the point where they can become an independent monastery. His Eminence brought attention to the support of many in the Diocese and gives great thanks. A discussion was held regarding the current state of the two seminaries, their future and the needs of the Church. An ad hoc committee will be formed by Fr. D. Lowell to discuss solutions to better address needs of the DOW (See the full report, submitted separately). Abp. Benjamin asked to represent the whole council in sending greetings to His Grace Bishop Tikhon to commemorate his anniversary of ordination.

NOTICE: Abp. Benjamin requested support from the Council for a \$500 honorarium for the Clergy Retreat speaker; support was unanimous. Source of funds at the discretion of the Finance Committee.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER - M. Caetta, reported that she has moved unused 2016 funds from roll-over accounts to designated funds in the checking account. Theodora has been a great help, and Mary will continue to update procedures for the future distribution of work and responsibilities to others. Non-Diocesan funds received from Christ the Savior Brotherhood as a result of its action to divest itself of all assets, are being passed through to the parishes designated. A short discussion was held regarding the donation. Lessons learned about the rollout of the new parish support were discussed. Reconciliation for 2016 Financial support is going well. Many treasurers are basing their month-to-month payments on the 'typical' average income of the parish.

MOTION by Fr. B. Rhodes: **To approve a \$500 Fee be paid to M. Caetta** for handling a pass-through donation from Christ the Savior Brotherhood, to compensate her for work which is above and beyond her duties as Diocesan Treasurer

SECOND by Fr. D. Kuolt: **PASSED**

REPORT OF THE CHANCELLOR – Fr. I. MacKinnon, Diocesan Chancellor, led a discussion about what is taking place around the Diocese. Excellent Mission Deanery retreat, both speaker and participation.

FINANCE COMMITTEE – no additional recommendations

INTERSHIP PROGRAM - Fr. I. MacKinnon, Diocesan Chancellor, remarked that two interns, Fr. Steven Osborne in Las Vegas and Fr. Timothy Winegard in Sacramento, are in their second year, and Fr Theodore Svane in Santa Rosa is at the end of his internship and will be returning to Norway.

DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY – Fr. I. MacKinnon lauded Holy Virgin Mary Cathedral for the successful Assembly this past year and announced that the 2017 Diocesan Assembly will be at St. Nicholas parish, Portland OR.

COMMUNICATIONS – Fr. J. Dresko stated that things are status quo, and noted that Hmk. Innocent has regularly sent in good articles for publishing.

OCCIF– Fr. J. Dresko reported he will be joining the board and replacing Fr. D. Lowell a clergy representative. With Fr. D. Lowell's help getting up to speed on OCCIF's status, he reports: Two parishes in Wasilla Alaska (OCA and ANT) and a new parish in Memphis, TN (OCA) are currently being funded by OCCIF. Ss. Cyril and Methodios, Chico CA, St. Demetrios (GOA) Tucson, AZ, and Holy Ascension (OCA-DOS) are three parishes in process of self-funding through OCCIF (i.e., funding sourced through parish sources, with OCCIF providing a 'clearing house' type of function). There are additional requests for \$2mm +/-, but no funds available yet. In July OCCIF will be presenting to the DOS assembly in Chattanooga and the Antiochian archdiocesan assembly in Miami. OCCIF needs to be recognized as a viable option for investment by parishes and individuals; to date OCCIF has been presented as a Charity, when it is a solid investment vehicle. An example of the change is a discussion with St. Vladimir Seminary for a \$2MM investment, and establishing a minimum threshold of \$50K for individuals. DOS is working on moving its church financing program (an internal method for funding parish projects) to OCCIF so there is clearer method to handle investments and loans.

DIOCESAN CHARITIES AND APPEALS – Fr. F. Lawrence reported the diocesan charity this year is Project Mexico. Two donations have been received so far. Discretionary funds are used locally.

PENSION FUND – Fr. M. Tate reported that next meeting is next week, and expectations are for good fund increases due to health of stock market. As with a number of recent changes (previously reported), all requests are looked at from an actuarial view of the impact on the pension fund itself. The main responsibility of the Pension Board is to maintain the health of the pension fund. Recently, a change was made that Hierarchs, who reach the age of 75 years, will be able to get their benefits without retiring. Reminder that retired priests are allowed to draw their benefits and work in temporary mission assignments (max 2 years) and earn up to an additional \$24,000 annually

PARISH SCREENING UPDATE – Fr. A. Smith reported the OCA has adopted the Protect My Ministry background check service. OCA central administration is doing a rolling training and DOW (i.e., Fr. A. Smith) is scheduled for September; after which the central administration will take responsibility for all background checks. Rectors will simply submit requests to the Diocese who will use the new system to enter information into a central database where they will be checked and records maintained. There is an outstanding question of how the billing will be handled. It was noted that this will be much more cost effective and each parish does not have to keep these records at a local level for many years.

SEMINARY VISITS - Fr. M. Tate reported there are currently three seminarians from DOW at St. Tikhon Seminary: two from Colorado Springs and one from Bozeman. However, they are all in their first year, and there are no second or third year seminarians with potential for taking a pastoral assignment in DOW. There is also a single seminarian at SVS in his second year, however there will be a time lag until he is married. The combination of the demographics of the DOW, and how that relates to missions makes the currently low population of seminarians a concern for our future.

SYNTAX CORPORATION – Sdn. J. Morse reported on the plans for the Duboce apartment. The proposal is to fix up the building for the future rector of Holy Trinity Cathedral, and to continue using the rectory at the Cathedral for the Bishop's residence and offices. It will require buying out the current tenant of one of the units, having Fr.

John T. (current resident in the other unit) move when he retires, and remodeling/converting the 2-story, 2-flat property into a single-family dwelling for the future Rector. Funding will come from both Synaxis Corporation and the Diocese (budgets and sources to be presented in the future). It was noted that we will continue to maintain the chapel, storage and guest room on the basement floor.

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL – Fr. J. Dresko reported the loss of Wesley Smith as DC member and Metropolitan Council member. The last meeting with Chancellors and Treasurers was particularly good. The change to Proportional Giving across the archdiocese is going very well. Due to rapidly rising costs, select staff have gone on the Health Insurance policies of their spouses. This is a significant savings, some of which was used to give a 2% raise to all employees of the archdiocese; something that has not happened in several years. There is an ongoing process of rewriting job descriptions and realigning organizational structure, to deal with ongoing problems with roles and personalities. Preservation of Archives work has begun with the donation of \$200,000. All American Council is set for July 23-27, 2018 in St. Louis, MO. Next meeting in September, 2017. (Note: a new lay delegate for Metropolitan Council needs to be chosen).

DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY 2017 - Fr. I. MacKinnon reported that the 2017 Diocesan Assembly is in planning for Oct 10-12 at St. Nicholas parish, Portland OR. Besides required business, speakers and presentations will be on things happening in Diocese.

INSURANCE COMMITTEE – L. Brunswig reported that we just received our new policy. Noted: Rental cars for Diocesan business will be covered, but more information will be needed. She will continue and follow through to implement the policy and get more information.

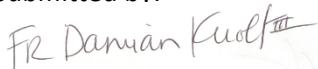
ADDITIONAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Hmk. Innocent reported on the monastery's setting up an Orthodox Life School, to inspire young people to remain in the Church and serve the Church. The model will be informed by the approach of Youth With A Mission (YWAM), which calls young adults to do something radical in service to the church and can set the tone for their whole life.

NEXT DIOCESAN COUNCIL MEETING – The next regular meeting of the Diocesan Council will take place at 10:30 a.m. on June 7, 2017 at Holy Trinity Cathedral. The Advisory Council will meet at 2:30 p.m. June 6, at the Bishop's Residence.

ADJOURNMENT – Fr. B. Rhodes, with unanimous acclaim and encouragement from the council, moved for adjournment. Archbishop Benjamin adjourned the meeting of the Diocesan Council at 1:24 p.m.

Submitted by:



Fr. Damian Kuolt, Diocesan Secretary