

ARCHDIOCESE OF PITTSBURGH AND WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA
ARCHDIOCESAN COUNCIL MEETING NOTES
4 FEBRUARY 2012

A special planning meeting of the Archdiocesan Council was held at the St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral (Allison Park) on February 4, 2012. A Divine Liturgy started the day with His Grace, Bishop Melchisedek as celebrant at the 8 AM service. The informal council deliberations began at 9:45 AM after a breakfast brunch served by the parish members of the Cathedral.

In addition to the diocesan hierarch, the following members of the Archdiocesan Council were present for this event held in the church hall: Archpriests/Priests P. Ziatyk (*Chancellor*), Igumen Patrick (Carpenter), M. Senyo (*Cathedral Dean/Host*), W. Evansky (*Secretary*), D. Hendershot (*Treasurer*), G. Johnson, G. Thompson, J. Wargo, G. Yatsko; Mesdames R. Danchenko and L. Nester; Messrs. S. Daniels, G. Nescott, G. Sidorick, N. Sidorick, Subdn. B. Truckley. Also present as guests were Archdiocesan clergy Fr. B. Biberdorf and Dcn. A. Cadman.

The meeting began with G. Nescott reporting that the special ad hoc committee formed to interview **administrative assistant candidates** met with three individuals. It was decided that, after consultation with His Grace, Mr. Barry Migyanko be hired pending finalization of details.

The following points are highlights gleaned from the day's "**brainstorming**" discussions that were led by Fr. M. Senyo and G. Nescott.

A. The following **list of problems** was compiled as enumerated by those present who were asked to briefly explain the problem they were presenting:

1. Role of women in the Archdiocese
2. Census decline
3. Parishes without priests
4. Lack of evangelization / visibility of our presence in the communities
5. Aging clergy
6. Lack of fellowship among clergy
7. Parochialism
8. Lack of targeted programs - especially youth and young adult sub-groups
9. Missions + vitality in already established parishes
10. Lack of resources for clergy when dealing with referrals
11. Lack of accountability / usage of diocesan structures
12. Religious education/ late vocations program revitalization (including church schools with small populations)
13. Continuing education for clergy
14. Clergy compensation
15. Clustering of existing parishes - - merge?
16. "Dying" parishes
17. Funding of the Archdiocese (especially as we transition to proportional giving)
18. No Archdiocesan involvement in the social media
19. Implementation of the O.C.A. sexual abuse policy in parishes
20. Usage of the Archbishop Kyrill endowment money
21. Future of the Archdiocesan Cranberry Twp. property
22. Poor communication between diocesan levels - - especially parish clergy to laity about Archdiocesan events, etc.
23. Lack of by-laws uniformity across the Archdiocese

B. The following **prioritized list of "top-ten" problems** was assembled by asking each council member to pick four items from the list above, ranking them in importance. (Each item was then weighted to be obtain the tally - - four points down to one point.)

1. Lack of evangelization
2. Census decline
3. Establishment of missions / vitality of established parishes
4. Usage of Archbishop Kyrill endowment funds + future of the Cranberry Twp. property
5. Lack of brotherhood among the clergy; also lacking clergy relationship with the hierarch
6. "Dying" parishes
7. Merging of parishes
8. Funding of diocese
9. By-laws standardization among the parishes
10. Tightening up of diocesan structures

C. The following are **discussion points - "evangelization + missions/ vitality of existing parishes:"**

1. Release diocesan funds for new missions? Possible loans from diocese to the missions?
2. Release diocesan funds to assist established parishes? How?
3. An overview of the Altoona-Johnstown Deanery's plan concerning the sharing of a priest among established parishes was reviewed
4. Use of Joseph Kormos as a consultant was discussed, along with using the talents of Fr. John Reeves and Fr. John Parker (newly appointed O.C.A. Department of Evangelization Chairperson). Consensus: G. Nescott to contact J. Kormos to discuss parameters of using his services in the diocese.
5. Consensus that problems #1,2,3,6, and 7 from above are closely interrelated.
6. A new Evangelization Subcommittee was formed:
Fr. G. Yatsko (Chair); Frs. B. Biberdorf, M. Senyo; Dcn. A. Cadman; L. Nester

D. The following are **discussion points - "diocesan property future:"**

1. Mission parish is still a possibility utilizing part of the property while the remainder could be sold
2. A subcommittee will be appointed at the next council meeting to explore possibilities concerning the diocesan properties - - including the Reed St. property

E. The following are **discussion points - "clergy communications:"**

1. A resumption of the gatherings of bishops and diocesan clergy
2. A resumption of clergy retreats once or twice a year

F. The following are **discussion points - "by-laws:"**

1. No existing written diocesan by-laws are available, although documents verifying articles of incorporation have been located
2. His Grace is reviewing similar diocesan by-laws to be used in formulating our own

G. **Next business meeting - March 5, 2012 - 6:30 PM - Cranberry Twp. center**

H. After closing comments, the session ended with prayer at 2:05 PM.

In Christ,

//signed//

Archpriest William Evansky
Secretary