

49TH ASSEMBLY OF THE DIOCESE OF THE MIDWEST
Minneapolis, Minnesota
3-5 October 2010

PLENARY SESSION I MONDAY, 3 OCTOBER 2010

I. OPENING.

The Assembly opened with the Invocation of the Holy Spirit and prayer at 7:10 p.m., after which His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah, called the Assembly to order.

II. CREDENTIALS.

One Metropolitan, 61 clergy delegates, 58 lay delegates, and 21 observers, for a total of 141 participants.

III. CHANCELLOR'S REPORT.

Metropolitan Jonah turned over the chair to Archpriest John Zdinak, diocesan chancellor, who welcomed the delegates and reminded them that "it is our vocation as leaders of the Diocese of the Midwest to discern God's will for our diocese" in the context of the impending nomination of a diocesan bishop." He reviewed how, with the approval of His Eminence, Archbishop Job, an Episcopal Search Committee had been established.

"Little did we know that 16 days later, our diocese would be widowed," Father John said. He reported that the settlement of Archbishop Job's estate -- a difficult task as the Archbishop had no will -- was completed most recently.

Father John also reported on preliminary plans for the consecration of a diocesan bishop, repairs underway at the Diocesan Center, and the installation and implementation of new *Quickbooks* financial software.

Within the context of Father John's report on the Chancery office, the Assembly expressed its deep gratitude to Protodeacon Joseph Matusiak for his selfless service. The delegates offered a standing ovation. The new Chancery assistant, Philip Sokolov, was then introduced. Sam D'Fantis thanked Father John for his work as Chancellor, for which he too received a standing ovation.

IV. METROPOLITAN'S REPORT.

Metropolitan Jonah reported on his ministry within the Diocese during the past year. He observed that "there are very good things happening in the Diocese, and in the Church in America at large. Of course, there are also problems, but where people are focused on Jesus Christ, and on their faith, and strive to overcome themselves and forgive one another, things progress extremely well."

He spoke of the Church as a missionary Church, an "indigenous Church not characterized by language or ethnicity" but committed to "actualizing the Kingdom in our midst."

In addition, he spoke about the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in North and Central America, recent developments in the quest for Orthodox unity in North America, the importance of recognizing the gift of autocephaly and its meaning, the proposed 2013 Great Council, the 16th All-American Council, the Strategic Plan, the OCA's late vocations program, and related matters. He complimented the Episcopal Selection Committee for their hard work, culminating in the election of a new diocesan bishop. He also thanked Father John Zdinak for his fine work as Diocesan Chancellor and the assistance he has offered during the past year.

Metropolitan Jonah fielded a variety of questions concerning autocephaly, the OCA's need to strengthen and develop its relationships with the other Orthodox Churches, the possibility of the Midwest Diocese embracing tithing, and related matters.

V. NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT.

Archpriest Thomas Mueller reported on impending elections to fill six offices, noting that nominees must be Assembly delegates. Nominations will close at the conclusion of Tuesday morning's plenary session.

VI. SEARCH COMMITTEE REPORT.

Michael Dorosh summarized the work of the Episcopal Search Committee, culminating in the nomination of a candidate for the office of diocesan Bishop.

VII. DEANERY REPORTS.

The reports of the Chicago, Cleveland, Columbus, Kansas City, Michigan, and Minneapolis deaneries were accepted as presented, with no additions.

There being no further business, the session adjourned at 9:15 p.m. with the singing of the Hymn to the Mother of God.

PLENARY SESSION II TUESDAY, 4 OCTOBER 2010

I. CREDENTIALS.

One Metropolitan, 70 clergy delegates, 64 lay delegates, and 22 observers were present as the session opened with the Invocation of the Holy Spirit and prayer at 9:06 a.m.

II. METROPOLITAN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES' REPORT.

Archpriest Michael Matsko and Mark Stokoe offered a detailed report on the work of the Metropolitan Council and the issues it is currently facing. Father Michael stated that, in light of his retirement in 2011, he would not seek another term, after which he received a standing ovation in recognition of his years of service as Metropolitan Council clergy representative.

III. MISSIONS, PARISH HEALTH MINISTRY REPORT.

Father Thomas Mueller and Joseph Kormos reported on this area of ministry. Mr. Kormos spoke about serious demographic changes, especially in the Cleveland area; the ministry's new "audit template" to assist parishes in auditing their finances; ministries undertaken by individual parishes through the diocese's ministry grant program, the growing interest in the parish health "webinars", and related matters.

Father Thomas thanked Mr. Kormos for his work and offered comments on the state of diocesan missions.

IV. TREASURER'S REPORT.

Robert Koncel, Treasurer, reviewed his report in detail. He highlighted the nature and cost of necessary repairs at the Diocesan Center, adding that the Diocesan Council had authorized up to \$40,000.00 for repairs. The Diocesan Council will review additional needs at its next meeting.

Mr. Koncel clarified points in the 2011 budget. "Travel" should read "Parish Development. Stipends for the Metropolitan as Locum Tenens and bookkeeper were also added. "Metropolitan Expenses" has been changed to "Consecration Expenses." He also reported that the switch to Quickbooks software was a most positive move.

Responding to a variety of enquiries, Mr. Koncel explained that in 2011, the Bishop's stipend and package is prorated from June through the end of the year. He spoke of various expenses anticipated with the consecration and installation of a new bishop. With regard to Parish Health Ministry, about 60% of the \$43,000.00 earmarked for Parish Development is returned to parishes, missions, and grants. Discussion ensued as to why the bishop's salary is less than that of the part-time Parish Health Facilitator.

The Treasurer's report, together with the 2011 budget and the Auditors's report, were accepted.

V. STRATEGIC PLAN PRESENTATION.

Priest John Vitko, chair of the OCA's Strategic Planning Committee, gave a presentation on the Strategic Plan, opening with a video emphasizing cultural identity and "our story" as the Church in North America. He went on to explain various aspects of the Plan, noting the importance of revitalizing sacramental life and commitment to sharing the Gospel. A variety of enquiries were addressed, including the concern for translating the "overall vision" into practical, local application, and appropriate methods of evaluation.

Father John Zdinak asked delegates for input with regard to the adoption of a pilot implementation plan by the Diocese of the Midwest.

The session ended at 12:20 p.m.

PLENARY SESSION III TUESDAY, 4 OCTOBER 2010

I. CREDENTIALS.

One Metropolitan, 70 clergy delegates, 68 lay delegates, and 20 observers were present as the session opened with the Invocation of the Holy Spirit and prayer at 2:00 p.m.

II. CONTINUATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN PRESENTATION.

Father John Vitko concluded his presentation, after which Father John Zdinak thanked him on behalf of the delegates.

III. RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE REPORT.

Archpriest John Adamcio delivered the report of the Resolutions Committee.

Resolution 1, which expresses support for the 2011 Archbishop Job Memorial Trip to Project Mexico, was adopted unanimously upon motion by Father Michael Matsko, seconded by Father Christopher Wojcik. Father Andrew Yavornitzky suggested that the Diocesan Council designate February 2011 as the month for garnering financial support for the trip.

Resolution 2, which calls upon the Diocese to adopt tithing as the means of financial support in place of the current “assessment“ system, was moved by Father Adamcio, seconded by Priest Mark Hodges. After lengthy discussion pro and con, the resolution was tabled.

IV. INTRODUCTION OF NOMINEES.

Father Thomas Mueller introduced the slate of candidates to fill six elected positions.

V. SEXUAL MISCONDUCT PRESENTATION.

Michael Herzak offered a presentation highlighting ways to reduce the risk of child sexual abuse in parishes, calling upon everyone to be “reasonable and prudent” in the effort to prevent abuse. He offered a variety of practical, yet important, guidelines, and suggested that every parish form a “safety committee” not only to monitor potentially negative situations, but to be vigilant in the face of other potential lawsuits [falling, slipping on ice, etc.].

VI. ELECTION RESULTS.

Father Thomas Mueller reported that Archpriest Basil Stoyka and Priest Nathan Kroll were elected to the Diocesan Council, with Father Thomas Mueller as alternate. Sam D’Fantis and Kitty Mabus were elected to the Diocesan Council, with Michael Herzak as alternate. Archpriest Alexander Kuchta was elected to the Metropolitan Council, with Priest Andrew Moore as alternate. Sam Jacob was elected Auditor.

VII. ADJOURNMENT.

There being no further business, the Assembly adjourned upon motion by Father Christopher Wojcik, seconded by Kitty Mabus, at 4:54 p.m. Members of the Diocesan Council were installed during the Service of Thanksgiving that followed.

WEDNESDAY, 5 OCTOBER 2010

The Divine Liturgy was celebrated at Saint Mary Cathedral, Minneapolis, after which the Special Assembly opened.

Respectfully submitted,
Archpriest John Matusiak, Secretary
Archpriest Mark Hodges
Ann Marie Gidus-Mecera

SPECIAL ASSEMBLY OF THE DIOCESE OF THE MIDWEST

Saint Mary Cathedral, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Wednesday, 5 October 2010

I. OPENING SERVICE OF PRAYER.

At 11:30 a.m., His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah, presided at the opening celebration of the Service of Prayer invoking the guidance of the Holy Spirit in nominating a candidate to fill the vacant See of Chicago and the Midwest.

II. CREDENTIALS: One Metropolitan, 73 clergy delegates, and 67 lay delegates, for a total of 141 participants.

III. CHANCELLOR'S REMARKS.

Archpriest John Zdinak, Diocesan Chancellor, stated that the sole purpose of the Special Assembly is to nominate a candidate for the vacant See of Chicago and the Midwest. The nominated candidate will be presented to the Holy Synod of Bishops for canonical election. He concluded by reviewing the election procedure.

A. First Ballot. If one of the three candidates receives 2/3rds or more of the votes, he is declared to be the Special Assembly's nominated candidate, and his name will be forwarded to the Holy Synod of Bishops for canonical election.

B. Second Ballot. If none of the three candidates receives 2/3rds or more of the vote on the first ballot, a second ballot will be taken. The candidate who received the *least* number of votes in the first ballot will no longer be considered. Hence, delegates will vote for one of the two candidates who received the greatest number of votes on the first ballot.

Father John emphasized that there are contingencies in place in the event of ties in either or both of the two ballots.

IV. THE VOTE.

At 12:08 p.m., the vote was taken. As the ballots were being counted, the assembly sang "The Grace of the Holy Spirit," "O Lord, save Thy People," the troparion of Saint Herman of Alaska, and other hymns.

At 12:21 p.m. it was announced that a 2/3rds majority had not been achieved. The name of candidate Archpriest David Mahaffey was removed from the second ballot, which was taken immediately.

At 12:31 p.m. it was announced that Priestmonk Matthias [Moriak] had been nominated. Upon motion by Archpriest Christopher Wojcik, seconded by Archpriest Andrew Yavornitzky, Father Matthias was nominated by acclamation.

V. ADJOURNMENT.

Father John thanked Archpriest Paul Wesche of Saint Herman Church, Minneapolis; the local Assembly committee; and the faithful of Saint Mary Cathedral for their fine work in making the Special Assembly a profitable one.

Upon motion to adjourn, the Special Assembly closed with the singing of the Hymn to the Mother of God at 12:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Archpriest John Matusiak, Secretary
Archpriest Mark Hodges
Ann Marie Gidus-Mecera