

Fall 2012 Metropolitan Council Meeting

September 25-27, 2012

East Norwich Inn,

East Norwich, NY (near Syosset)

by Janet Van Duyn & Fr John Shimchick
(Diocesan Lay and Clergy Representatives)

The Divine Liturgy was celebrated on the first day at the Chancery, a good beginning.

Bishop Michael chaired the Metropolitan Council (MC) Meeting and opened with an exhortation to move the work of the Church forward.

The morning was spent mostly in discussion regarding the following concerns: 1) OCA relations with other Orthodox Churches, (specifically the Russian Orthodox Church); 2) Metropolitan Jonah's resignation; 3) Matters internal to the Council (namely the conduct of members present and former); 4) An informational discussion about the proceedings of the Sexual Misconduct Committee, which stressed the importance of creating a clear and consistent plan to deal with these matter under the guidance of the Lesser Synod.

The afternoon was also spent mostly in discussion. Legal matters, largely speculation on possible threats to the Church, were presented, as well as a report of the Legal committee. Internal matters of personnel and Departmental assignments at the Chancery were also discussed.

The upcoming All American Council arrangements were presented and discussed, including budget, security issues, delegate and observer space, and other matters.

The evening was spent in an exercise to identify major issues facing the Orthodox Church in America. After small group discussion, topics were rated in importance by all MC members.

Wednesday morning opened with a summary of the previous night's exercise to identify major issues. Church planting and evangelization were at the top of the list, with communication and education being other high priorities. Having identified these priorities, the MC spent the morning discussing matters internal to the MC and the Chancery. The Charity committee reported some good works accomplished, but lacks both direction and funds. The Post-Conciliar Committee (PoCC) reported a variety of initiatives being pursued to bring the Strategic Plan to life. These initiatives are small but show forward momentum. Each of the Committee's seven goals includes a Liaison from the MC and an Implementation Facilitation Team Leader. Fr. Shimchick is the Liaison for "*Diocesan Revitalization*," with Team Leader, Donna Karabin. This Team is working with Archbishop Tikhon and the "Diocesan Revitalization Committee of Eastern PA."

The Treasurer's Report is positive in that the budget is being covered for this year, debts are being paid off quickly and well, and investments are being conservatively invested to some good effect. Financial development was nil for the past six months was delayed due to the confusion created by the Metropolitan's resignation.

The 2013 Budget presentation hinged on the reduced assessment. After lengthy discussion of the impacts this and further reduction might have on the Church in various ways, the MC did pass a deficit budget featuring the lowered assessment mandated by the 16th AAC. The deficit was for mission planting. Later the budgeted deficit was increased to allow for increased legal fees.

The last morning of the Council was taken up by a financial analyst presenting a plan for better management of pension plan assets. The new asset management plan was approved. Finally, a research study of Orthodoxy in America was presented by Alexei Krindatch.

In all, the MC did not seem to have achieved much at the present session. After the official session closed, the financial development committee did put the delegate travel appeal into place, with some success, and also an evangelization appeal, which will begin at the AAC. Also, the special committee on organization began apportioning tasks to its

members. It is to be hoped that once a new Metropolitan is in place, the shocks of crises past can be left in the past, and the Church can begin again the work of saving souls in America.

Jan and Fr. John are members of the following MC Committees:

Financial Development: **David Yeosock (Chair)**
 Bishop Michael (Synod Liaison)
 Melanie Ringa (Chancery Liaison)
 Fr. David Mahaffey
 Fr. John Shimchick
 Janet Van Duyn

Finance/Investment: **Fr. Gleb McFatter (Chair)**
 Bishop Irenece (Synod Liaison)
 Melanie Ringa (Chancery Liaison)
 Fr. Robert Dick
 Maureen Jury
 Jeremy Pletnikoff
 Janet Van Duyn
 Fr. Matthew Tate (consultant)

Post Conciliar: **Fr. John Vitko (Chair)**
 Bishop Michael (Synod Liaison)
 Fr. John Jillions (Chancery Liaison)
 Fr. Michael Anderson
 Fr. Robert Dick
 Fr. John Dunlop
 Fr. Chad Hatfield
 James Karabin
 Judge E.R. Lanier
 Fr. David Lowell
 PDN Michael Myers
 Fr. John Reeves
 Fr. John Shimchick
 David Zavednak
 Fr Alexis Vinogradov (consultant)

Special Committee on OCA Organization

Archbishop Nathaniel
Archbishop Tikhon
Archbishop Nikon
Archbishop Benjamin
Bishop Michael
Fr. John Jillions
Fr. Eric G. Tosi
Melanie Ringa
Maureen Jury
Fr. John Shimchick
Janet Van Duyn