

FELLOWSHIP OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE
DIOCESE OF TOLEDO AND THE MIDWEST
PARISH LIFE CONFERENCE – CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
JUNE 24, 2005

The meeting was called to order at 1:45 by the Council Leader, Cathy Snyder. Fr. Joseph Abud, our Spiritual Advisor, led us in prayer.

The Minutes were presented to the body. Esther Simbol moved to dispense with the reading of the Minutes. Kathy Abraham seconded. Passed. Minutes accepted as presented.

Cathy Snyder asked members present to introduce themselves.

The host of the 2005 Fall Gathering will be Fr. Anthony Yazge, St. George Church of Terre Haute.

Cathy spoke about various Teams in the Fellowship.

TEAM REPORTS:

▪ **Programs Team – Sarah Najjar**

This year all rules and forms were available on the Internet. In Creative Arts 21 parishes participated with 476 entries; Creative Writing has 16 parishes participating with a total of 235 entries; Creative Photography has 8 parishes participating with a total of 36 entries; Creative Poetry has 15 parishes participating with 144 entries. There were only 9 Scholarship applications received this year. Sarah advised all parishes to pick up their envelopes. She thanked Cicero for a great job and all her Coordinators and volunteers.

Fr. Joe Abud commended Sarah on the one mailing. Said it was great. Discussion about deadline dates. Creative Festivals deadline is April 1.

Cathy stated that changing from trophies to medals has made things easier. Letters being sent to the parents has helped with attendance. Next year notification of winners will go to the Priest and the Church School superintendent.

▪ **FINANCIAL REPORT: DARLENE HADDAD**

Darlene reported a beginning balance of \$14,117.66 on March 12, 2005 . The balance as of June 24, 2005 is \$20,023.63. Only three churches have not paid their dues: St. George Troy; Holy Resurrection, Hobart, IN and St. George, Cedar Rapids.

Bob Snyder asked if there was a statement available showing where we were financially 3 years ago with today. Darlene explained that that depends on the revenue received from the Parish Life Conference. Parishes have paid their dues and many of our costs are down, especially on mailings. More communication is being done by e-mail.

Bob Snyder moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. Fr. Dan Rohan seconded. Passed.

- **ORATORICAL & CHOIR FESTIVAL – REGINA SALLOUM**

Regina stated that the Oratorical & Choir Festival went very well. There were 2 Juniors and 7 Seniors participating.

Regina introduced George David who spoke about Nick Assilay, a Past President of the Fellowship who is now deceased. George spoke about the various bequests made by Nick Assilay. One such bequest was for \$4,000.00 – each participant in the Oratorical Festival will receive a \$100.00 Savings Bond. George stated that when this money is used up his heirs will continue this.

The winner is provided with room and board to the Oratorical Festival for the Archdiocese Convention in Dearborn, MI. this year.

Regina stated that the consolidation of the Oratorical Festival and the Choir Festival is working very well.

- **CONTRIBUTIONS – SACRED MUSIC FOR MISSIONS**

Cathy spoke about the CD's being sold to raise funds to subsidize sending representatives from Missions and small churches to the Sacred Music Workshop. The first CD was done by Fort Wayne. The Kurien children have also produced a CD. Cathy introduced The Kurien children. Sarah Kurien presented a check in the amount of \$5,000.00 which represents ½ of the proceeds from their CD. They can be heard soon on the Internet Radio Station. The Kurien's sang one of the selections from the CD.

Cathy explained that we want Missions and small parishes to take advantage of this scholarship and attend the workshop. St. Matthew's Church will be sending a representative this year.

- **COMMUNICATIONS - LINDA SIMON**

Linda spoke about the Midwest Directory which was e-mailed to all Priests. Hard copies were also made available.

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Website: Cathy stated that we are currently in need of a Webmaster. Fr. Basil Koory has offered to help. They are looking for one or several people to devote five hours a week. Fr. Joe Abud explained it is information submitted to the Webmaster that would need to be posted on the Website.

- **LONG RANGE PROJECT TEAM: JOE ZOGAIB**

Joe Zogaib is unable to be with us as he is in the midst of his wedding preparations. Cathy asked that any churches that have a special program at their church to e-mail Joe with the information.

- **SPECIAL PROJECTS & EVENTS TEAM: KATHY ABRAHAM**

Kathy Abraham explained that she works on the Themes for the meetings. One meeting in the Spring/Leadership Training and the Fall Gathering is a Retreat – Refocus on Missions. We started having a Keynote speaker 3 years ago. Father David Randolf was our first; Fredricka Matthews-Green; and Fr. Paul O’Callahan is to be our speaker today. He has run into airline problems presently so Fr. Dan Daly will be filling in for him speaking on the “Roots of Faith”.

At our Fall Gathering Fr. Joseph Corrigan, Fr. Michael Abdelahad, Fr. Isaac Henke, and Fr. Dan Daly have been our speakers. The hope is that information will be taken back to your parish.

- **PARISH LIFE CONFERENCE TEAM: JOHN BOURJAILY**

Cathy spoke about Dave Slaman who worked hard for many years in this position then passed the baton to John Bourjaily. Fr. Joe read John’s report. The Fall Gathering will be the last weekend in October. Contracts were recently signed for the hotel in Lexington, Kentucky. Fr. Joe stated that John has worked very hard and has a gift to negotiate with hotels. Discussion about date for Spring Meeting. Cheesefare Sunday was suggested also the Pharisee & Publican. Fr. Joe will discuss this matter with the Bishop.

Bob Snyder asked that the Spring date be set so we do not have a problem as we did last year with the Basketball Tournament in Canton was one week prior to the Spring Meeting and hurt attendance. We are looking for a fixed date for the Spring Meeting.

Fr. Stephen Ziton asked if the Spring and Fall meetings could be combined to save on costs. Cathy explained that the Spring Meeting is a necessity to make sure everything is in place for the Parish Life Conference and the Fall Gathering is a Retreat format. It was suggested that we look at the weekend of the Publican and the Pharisee.

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Cathy thanked David Slaman and John Bourjaily for all their hard work. Cathy stated that we need someone to host the Spring meeting. There are Guidelines available for anyone interested. Fr. Elias Khouri from Cedar Rapids asked that information be sent to him and he will look it over.

- **PARISH LIFE CONFERENCE 2006: NORTH ROYALTON, OHIO**

Cathy introduced Mark Katzbach who passed out flyers on the 2006 Parish Life Conference. Metropolitan PHILIP will be the Presiding Hierarch. The room rates at the Holiday Inn are \$94.00 per night with free parking free shuttle to airport. Cathy asked that the Schedule be presented at the Fall Meeting.

Bishop MARK arrived and Cathy gave him a brief synopsis of the meeting.

- **MISSIONS TEAM: REGINA SALLOUM**

Regina stated that quarterly checks are sent to the present Missions. She asked that we continue to raise funds for the Mission Endowment Fund and work for Missions.

Larger churches should adopt a Mission and help them.

Cathy welcomed representatives from St. Raphael (Iowa) and St. Barnabas (Columbus) Missions who are with us today. Cathy spoke about the list of needs for Missions previously posted on our Website. She asked members of Missions to forward a list of their needs to her.

We have given a historical payout to Missions of \$95,000.00 over the last 10 years.

The Endowment Fund will now cover our support to Missions. A portion of the \$500.00 dues assessment (\$250.00) is allocated to Missions.

- **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION WORKSHOP:** Bob Snyder spoke about the workshop on Saturday. They will be discussing Bio-Ethics. There will be a Workshop in Livonia on August 6; September 10th – Training Workshop in Cleveland, Ohio; November 8 – Workshop at the Village.
- **FOOD FOR HUNGRY PEOPLE & LIBRARY PROJECT: LINDA SIMON**

Linda spoke about the NAC Library Project where a church can purchase a set of 12 books for their local library; a Mission; university or college to spread the word about Orthodoxy.

Linda thanked everyone for their support of the Food for Hungry People. Total so date reported to Linda is \$ 26,620.06. Thank you notes were sent to parishes.

Sayedna thanked the Fellowship for all the hard work they have done. He thanked Cathy for the tremendous job she has done and all the hard work in getting the Mission Fund where it is. The goal of \$250,000.00 has been reached. Presently the total is \$253,000.00.

Present Missions: Solon, OH; Columbus, OH; St. Raphael, Iowa City; St. Catherine, Ann Arbor; All Saints, Bloomington, IN. There is a new Mission in Fargo N.D. and St. Elias, Peoria. The Mission in St. Louis is willing to pay a priest \$61,000.00. They fly a priest in every Sunday.

Bishop MARK stated there will be no Bingo in this Diocese. “We do not want to be known as people who take” – “We should be known as people who give.” We want to be a light to the community. “Go to all the people and spread the Word of God, teaching them and bringing them to God.”

Sayedna stated that we received \$10,000.00 from the Mission Endowment Fund for distribution to the Missions. When you divide this amount by 6 – it is a pittance.

Missions will not grow if it is a Sunday only church. We have to enable them so they can have weekday services, Vespers, and Sunday School. If we can help these Missions then we know we are doing God’s work.

Sayedna asked that churches gather together old religious items not being used in their churches and donate them to a Mission.

TIERED ASSESSMENT: DARLENE HADDAD

Darlene recommended that the dues be \$300.00 per parish. NAC commitment is \$100.00 and \$200.00 to the Fellowship. Dues previously were \$500.00 of which \$100.00 was for NAC; 250.00 to Missions and \$150.00 to the Fellowship. Fr. Elias Khouri stated that reducing the dues would be counter-productive. Keep it the same. Bishop MARK asked that Missions be added as a line item in the church’s budget.

Darlene explained that our Revenues are dependent on the revenue from the Parish Life Conference. Our expenses last year were \$13,850.00.

Bob Snyder moved that we hold the dues at \$500.00. Fr. Elias Khouri seconded.

Discussion followed. Bob Koory, Chair of Mission expressed his concern about the welfare of the Endowment Fund. What will you do with surplus money? He stated we need to encourage parishes and Priests to raise money for Missions.

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Sayedna stated that he is talking with the Deans to do more things on a local level to save on travel costs. “I want this Diocese to be strong.”

Fr. Dahdal suggested that a second collection for the Mission Endowment Fund be taken when Sayedna is visiting a church.

George David suggested we table this discussion.

Call for vote on motion: 16 in favor – motion passed. Dues will remain at \$500.00.

Fr. Joe moved that a line item in the amount of \$5,000.00 for expenses for Missions be added to our budget for the Mission Council – to be used at their discretion. Second by Regina Salloum. Passed.

Fr. Joe moved to accept the Budget as amended. Jackie Fahey seconded. Passed.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS: FR. JOSEPH ABUD

Fr. Joe presented the following slate:

Joe Zogaib Council Lead
Sarah Najjar Program Lead
Linda Simon Communications Lead
Cathy Snyder Financial Lead

Fr. Joe read letter from Joseph Zogaib accepting nomination and expressing his thoughts on the future growth of the Fellowship.

Bob Snyder moved to accept the slate as presented. V. Rev.Fr. John Mangels seconded. Passed.

Father Joe thanked Darlene Haddad and Cathy Snyder for all their hard work.

Meeting adjourned at 4:15 P.M. with a prayer by Sayedna MARK.

Respectfully,

Linda A. Simon