

MINUTES OF THE DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY/ 5 JUNE 1977/ WILKES-BARRE, PENNSYLVANIA

The Annual Assembly of the DIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA AND PENNSYLVANIA of the ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA was held on Saturday, 5 June 1977, at Holy Trinity Church, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. Following a Divine Liturgy and Opening Moleben celebrated by His Grace, Bishop Herman and the Diocesan Deans, the Assembly was formally opened by His Eminence, Archbishop Kiprian at 11:10 a.m. with the singing of "O Heavenly King."

MORNING REGISTRATION. The morning registration of delegates, Diocesan Council members, auditors and guests was as follows:

2 Bishops
35 30 Priests
25 27 Lay Delegates
3 Diocesan Council Members, Auditors
7 9 Guests
71 in attendance
72 total -

ELECTION OF ASSEMBLY OFFICERS. Bishop Herman opened the elections for Assembly officers. The following were elected to the indicated posts:

Fr. Daniel Ressetar, Clergy Vice-President
Dr. Alexander Pianovich, Lay Vice-President
Fr. John Matusiak, Clergy Secretary
Mrs. Marie C. McCarty, Lay Secretary

AGENDA. The agenda was approved as read upon motion by Fr. Joseph Gallick, seconded by Fr. John Chupeck.

1976 ASSEMBLY MINUTES. The minutes of the 1976 Assembly were read privately. Fr. Alexander Fedoronko asked that the reference to himself on page 5 be corrected to read: "On the motion, Fr. Fedoronko expressed his opinion." Mr. Russell Dugan moved to accept the minutes as corrected, seconded by Fr. Joseph Martin, and unanimously passed.

ARCHBISHOP'S REPORT. The written report of His Eminence, Archbishop Kiprian, is attached to these minutes and made a part thereof. His Eminence spoke on the late Patriarch Tikhon, noting that 1977 marks the 60th anniversary of his election to the Moscow Patriarchate. His Eminence also stated that the autocephaly granted our Church in 1970 was the fulfillment of the late Patriarch's dreams while he was Archbishop of North America. The Assembly paused to sing "Memory Eternal" for Patriarch Tikhon and Fr. Andrew Slepecky, who passed away in 1976.

DIOCESAN SECRETARY'S REPORT. The report of the Diocesan Secretary, Fr. Daniel Donlick, is attached to these minutes and made a part thereof. Upon motion by Fr. Rodion Kondratich, seconded by Mr. Don Motel, the report was unanimously accepted.

DIOCESAN TREASURER'S REPORT. The report of the Diocesan Treasurer, Fr. Paul Ropitsky, is attached to these minutes and made a part thereof. Mr. Jerry Russin reported the findings of the Auditors, noting that the books were in order, and commended Fr. Ropitsky on his fine work as Treasurer. The Auditor's report is attached to these minutes and made a part thereof. Fr. George Pawlush motioned that the two reports be accepted, seconded by Fr. John Chupeck, and unanimously passed.

MISSION DEPARTMENT. Prior to presenting his report on the Mission Department, His Grace, Bishop Herman, commented on the financial state of the Diocese and the National Church. His Grace stressed the importance of making assessment payments regularly and quarterly. It was also reported that our Diocese has been assessed over \$9,000.00 by the National Church to help meet their budget. Concerning the missionary outreach of the Diocese, His Grace began by outlining the history of the mission in Stroudsburg, which presently services approximately 35 families. Relations with the Greeks in the area were also noted. Concerning St. Mark's Mission, Doylestown, His Grace reported that he had met with the parishioners several times, and that a complete report was submitted to His Eminence, Archbishop Kiprian. The \$100.00 subsidy to this mission has been terminated pending the assignment of a permanent Rector. Plans are underway for a meeting and Vesper Service in the Williamsport area in the near future, where a substantial number of families and individuals have expressed their desire to initiate a mission. Fr. Claude Vinyard is coordinating the effort there. His Grace answered questions posed by Frs. Fedoronko and Michael Romanchak both on finances and the relationship of the Orthodox Church in America with certain Greek parishes formerly attached to the Patriarchate of Alexandria.

DIOCESAN EDUCATION DEPARTMENT. Fr. John Matusiak, Director of the Diocesan Education Department, gave that Department's report, which is attached to these minutes and made a part hereof. Fr. Matusiak noted the positive response to Church and Home, the Diocese's educational journal, and urged all parishes to encourage their youth to participate in the Diocesan teen retreat on August 4-6 at St. Tikhon's.

INSURANCE PROGRAM. Mr. Russell Dugan, Director of the Diocesan Insurance Program, presented a report representing the past fiscal year, which is attached to these minutes and made a part thereof. Mr. Dugan noted that to date there were 27 members and 3 new applicants in the program.

CLERGY SALARY GUIDELINES. Fr. Vladimir Borichevsky presented the report of the Clergy Salary Guideline Committee, which is attached to these minutes and made a part thereof. Discussion on the report involved Mr. William Sutsko, Frs. Michael Romanchak, John Kuchta and Vladimir Borichevsky, and Mr. Don Motel. Various suggestions concerning tenure, cost of living and geographical location were discussed, and it was decided that these suggestions would be worked into a resolution to be presented at the afternoon session of the Assembly.

DIOCESAN DAY COMMITTEE. His Grace, Bishop Herman reported on plans for the Diocesan Day program. His Grace noted that the Committee has decided to work out a program featuring our newly formed Diocesan Choir, having rejected several other ideas which proved infeasible.

DIOCESAN CHOIR. Fr. Daniel Ressetar reported on the Diocesan Choir; a copy of the report is attached to these minutes and made a part thereof. Fr. Ressetar encouraged the participation of all in this endeavor. Fr. Paul Ropitsky motioned to accept the report, seconded by Mr. Walter Mason, and unanimously passed.

Prior to the adjournment for lunch, announcements were made concerning a bus to the All-American Council, the availability of sacramental certificates, and the CEOYLA Festival. The Assembly adjourned for lunch at 12:40 p.m.

AFTERNOON REGISTRATION: The afternoon registration was as follows:

- 2 Bishops
- 31 Priests
- 28 Lay Delegates
- 4 Diocesan Council Members, Auditors
- 10 Guests
- 75 in attendance

DEANERY REPORTS: Individual Deanery reports were presented and are attached to these minutes and made a part thereof. Fr. George Pawlush asked that the \$50.00 contribution of the Wilkes-Barre Deanery to the Diocesan Education Department be added to that report. Mr. William Sutsko motioned, seconded by Fr. Vladimir Petorak, that the reports be accepted as corrected; unanimously passed.

BUDGET: Fr. Joseph Martin presented the proposed budget for 1977-78, which is based on an increase in the individual annual assessment from \$2.00 to \$3.00. Fr. Martin noted that only 6,800 adults were reported within the Diocese, and doubted that these statistics were accurate. The budget has been based on this number of adults. It was also noted that according to the statistics kept by the National Church, as of 9 Nov. 1976, our Diocese counted over 7,000 adult members. Discussion ensued among His Grace, Bishop Herman, Frs. Joseph Martin, Alexander Fedoronko, Daniel Donlick, Dionysius Swencki, Daniel Ressetar, Michael Romanchak, Vladimir Borichevsky and John Matusiak, and Messers. Peter Truszkowski, William Sutsko, Don Motel, John Lorchak, and Miss Ann Thompson. Upon motion by Fr. Michael Romanchak, seconded by Mr. Russell Dugan, the budget was passed as presented with 57 voting in favor, 3 against, and 3 abstentions.

RESOLUTIONS: Fr. Vladimir Borichevsky presented the report of the Clergy Salary Guideline Committee in the form of a motion stating that "the provisions listed in the report be accepted by the Diocesan Assembly as presented, and that the size of parish, tenure of priesthood be considered. These guidelines are effective for all newly ordained priests in this Diocese, and are to be implemented in all parishes effective 1 January 1978." Discussion on the motion included His Grace, Bishop Herman, Frs. John Kuchta and Joseph Gallick, and Messers. Don Motel and Theodore Sagan. Fr. Borichevsky's motion was seconded by Mr. Motel, and the resolution passed unanimously.

ALL-AMERICAN COUNCIL: His Eminence, Archbishop Kiprian reminded the Assembly that each parish was to elect a delegate for the All-American Council. His Grace, Bishop Herman, discussed plans of the Pre-Conciliar Commission, and noted the dates of the Council.

NEW BUSINESS: Miss Ann Thompson gave several suggestions for Diocesan programs, including an emphasis on adult education. Fr. John Matusiak outlined many of the activities of the Diocesan Education Department, noting the successful lecture series during Great Lent in the Frackville Deanery, and revealed plans for the future for similar events in the other Deaneries. His Grace, Bishop Herman, outlined programs offered at St. Tikhon's Seminary, and announced a proposed course for readers and choir directors. Mr. Don Motel suggested that the function of a Diocesan Center be fully explored, keeping in mind various objectives and programs. Fr. Donlick noted the urgent need for a suitable meeting room for the Diocesan Council within the Diocesan Center building. His Grace, Bishop Herman, announced that male and female observers will be admitted to the sessions of the All-American Council, and that each parish will receive the appropriate forms in the mail in the coming weeks.

At this time, the guests of the Assembly were acknowledged, including Fr. James Doyle of St. Tikhon's Seminary and Protodeacon Basil Hubiak.

DIOCESAN INCORPORATION: His Grace, Bishop Herman, explained the articles of incorporation for the Diocese, noting that they are based on the incorporation papers of the Diocese of San Francisco. The Articles and By-laws were read to the Assembly by Fr. John Matusiak and Bishop Herman, after which a motion to accept them was made by Fr. Vladimir Borichevsky, which reads as follows: "that the Articles of Incorporation and By-laws be accepted as read at the Diocesan Assembly with the following changes: 1.) that the word 'charitable' be changed to 'religious'; 2.) that the dissolution clause state that the Orthodox Church in America be made the recipient in case of the dissolution of the corporation. I further move that this resolution be implemented by the Diocesan Council as soon as possible." The motion was seconded by Fr. John Bohush, and unanimously passed.

THANKS: The thanks of the Diocesan Assembly was offered the Pastor, Council and parishioners of Holy Trinity Church, Wilkes-Barre, for the use of their facilities for the Assembly, and especially to the parish Sisterhood for their excellent job of preparing the meals and offering their gracious hospitality to all delegates and guests.

ADJOURNMENT: The Assembly adjourned at 3:50 p.m. upon motion by Fr. Rodion Kondratich, seconded by Fr. John Sorochka, and was formally closed with the singing of "It is truly meet to bless you, O Theotokos." Great Vespers were served immediately following the adjournment.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. John Matusiak, Clergy Secretary

Mrs. Marie C. McCarty, Lay Secretary

Approved By: + Archbishop Kiprian
His Eminence, Archbishop KIPRIAN

Date: July 21, 1978

REPORT OF THE CLERGY GUIDELINE COMMISSION (adopted at the above Diocesan Assembly with the provisions listed in the official Minutes).

"It is the recommendation of the commission to institute the following guidelines effective January 1, 1978.

1. The minimum salary of the priest be increased from \$500.00 a month to \$600.00 a month plus the cost of living increase.
2. The benefit of car allowance be added to the benefits of the clergy at the rate of \$50.00 a month or \$600.00 a year.
3. The clergy is entitled to a vacation of 2 weeks and 2 Sundays a year at the discretion of the clergyman. The parish is to pay the cost of a substitute priest to serve at a fee of \$75.00 per Sunday.
4. A reminder that also the parish is responsible for the benefits which were given to the clergy at previous assemblies:
 - a. The benefit of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield program. Preferably the program sponsored by the Diocese.
 - b. The benefit of the Pension Plan sponsored by the Orthodox Church in America. 5% from the parish and 5% from the clergy.
 - c. Full Social Security with consideration to be given for House allowance.
5. The Diocesan Bishop appoint a board of arbitration composed of laymen and priest."

1977
13 ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

20 DIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA AND PENNSYLVANIA

ARCHPASTORAL ADDRESS OF HIS EMINENCE, THE MOST REVEREND
K I P R I A N,

ARCHBISHOP OF PHILADELPHIA AND PENNSYLVANIA

Reverend Fathers and Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

CHRIST IS IN OUR MIDST!

I greet and welcome all of you who have gathered at our Church of the Holy Trinity in the City of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania on the occasion of the Annual Diocesan Assembly.

The following events have taken place in the Diocese of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania since the last Diocesan Assembly held at St. Tikhon's Seminary on September 25, 1976:

1976:

Oct. 5th -

Oct. 26th:

The Annual Adult Lecture Series sponsored by St. Tikhon's Theological Seminary was held and more than 100 certificates were presented to our Diocesan Clergy, Church School Teachers and Laity who participated in this educational Series.

Oct. 7th:

The following appointments were made:

Diocesan Representative to the Metropolitan Council:

Archpriest Joseph Martin & Mr. Russell Dugan

Diocesan Secretary: Archpriest Daniel K. Donlick

Diocesan Treasurer: Priest Paul Ropitsky

Director of Special Collections: Priest Rodion Kondratick

Director of Religious Education: Priest John Matusiak

The following elected individuals were CONFIRMED as members of the Diocesan Council:

Archpriests: George Pawlush, Joseph Martin

Priests: Rodion Kondratick, Nestor Geeza

Messrs: Russell Dugan, Michael Kurtz, Don Motel, Stephen P. Kopestonsky

Oct. 10th:

I participated in the celebration of the burning of the mortgage of the Church of Christ the Saviour at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

1976:

- Oct. 24: I participated in the 75th Anniversary Celebration of the Church of the Holy Trinity at McAdoo, Pennsylvania.
- Nov. 6th: Accepted the resignation of Priest Nestor Geeza, Diocesan Council Member from the Philadelphia Deanery under Resolution #157.
- Appointed Priest Dionysius Swencki Philadelphia Deanery Representative and member of the Diocesan Council under Resolution #158.
- Dec. 5th: Bishop Herman, Chairman of the Diocesan Department of Missions, met with a group of Orthodox Christians following a Vesper Service in the Stroudsburg-Pocono Area for the purpose of establishing an Orthodox Mission in that area.

1977:

- Feb. 27th: Bishop Herman and I along with many of the Clergy of the Frackville and Wilkes-Barre Deaneries conducted the beautiful Triumph of Orthodoxy Service in the Cathedral of the Holy Resurrection at Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania
- Throughout the Season of Great Lent Bishop Herman and I conducted and participated in the Liturgical Services at many of our Diocesan Parishes. During these Archpastoral Visitations it was very pleasing to see the great numbers of people attending Divine Services which testified to the faith of the spiritual children of our Diocese and the dedicated labors of our devoted Clergy.
- Appointed Hieromonk Sebastian to take care of the spiritual needs of the Orthodox Christians at the Stroudsburg area Mission.
- May 15th: Following the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy at the Church of St. Nicholas at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, I conducted the Groundbreaking ceremonies for their new Church edifice.
- May 30th: The 73rd Annual Pilgrimage to our St. Tikhon's Monastery was held with many of our venerable Hierarchy, Clergy and Faithful in attendance. In addition to the two Hierarchical Liturgies, many Liturgical Services were conducted throughout the day. We were especially honored with the presence of the Primate of our Church, His Beatitude, the Most Blessed IRENEY, and also with the presence of the Primate of the Orthodox Church of Japan, His Eminence, the Most Reverend THEODOSIUS.
- June 5th: Following the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy at the Church of St. John the Baptist at Mayfield, Pennsylvania, I conducted the Blessing of the new Parish Rectory.

In conclusion I would like to express sincere thanks and appreciation to Bishop Herman, the members of our Diocesan Council, the venerable Clergy and the beloved Faithful of our Diocese for their assistance and cooperation in the past year.

By the Grace of God we will continue to labor for the promotion and welfare of our Diocese of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania and our Orthodox Church in America and we call upon all of our Beloved Flock for your continued support and cooperation.

+ Kiprian,

+KIPRIAN, Archbishop of Philadelphia
and Pennsylvania