

MINUTES OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH ASSEMBLY OF
THE DIOCESE OF EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

The 27th Annual Assembly of the Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania of the Orthodox Church in America was convened on Saturday, August 4, 1990 at St. Tikhon's Seminary/Monastery, South Canaan, Pennsylvania.

His Grace, Bishop HERMAN, Bishop of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania, con-celebrated the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy and Mollen with clergy representing the three deaneries.

Following the Divine Liturgy, the Assembly gathered in the Seminary Dining Hall for a continental breakfast. Clergy, delegates and observers then proceeded to the Seminary Auditorium, the site of the Assembly sessions, for registration.

ASSEMBLY SESSION

The Session was begun with prayer and the blessing of Bishop HERMAN at 11:40 a.m. His Grace welcomed the delegates and declared the 27th Diocesan Assembly to be in session.

Fr. Daniel Donlick read the agenda. No changes were made to the agenda and it was accepted by the assembly.

Credentials committee:

Fr. John Onofrey reported the following:

Hierarchy	1
Clergy	34
Laity	33
Alternates	3
Diocesan Council	2

for a total of 73 present at the Assembly.

Election of Assembly Officers:

Fr. Donlick submitted the following clergy and laity for Assembly Officers:

Clergy Vice-Chairman --	Fr. Joseph Martin
Lay Vice-Chairman --	Mr. Jacob Barsigian
Clergy Secretary --	Fr. David Shewczyk
Lay Secretary --	Mrs. Marie Proch

There being no further nominations on the floor, Fr. David Lisko moved to close nominations for Vice-Chairman, seconded by Fr. Neal Carrigan. Motion Carried.

There being no further nominations on the floor, Fr. Vladimir Petorak moved to close nominations for Secretary, seconded by Fr. John Udics. Motion carried.

MINUTES OF THE 1989 ASSEMBLY

The minutes of the 1989 Assembly were a part of the preconconciliar packet sent to the delegates and were presented. There being no corrections, additions or deletions, Fr. John Mason moved and Fr. Michael Hatrak seconded, that the minutes be accepted. Motion carried.

DIOCESAN BISHOP'S REPORT

Bishop HERMAN stated that his activities are listed in the Public Relations report.

His Grace then intoned "Memory Eternal" for the newly-departed Archpriest Samuel Sulich and the Priest Valerian Dzury.

Bishop HERMAN reported that the vacancy in St. Mary's in Saint Clair is currently filled by Fr. Joseph Martin. The spiritual needs of the parishoners of St. Michael Church, Old Forge are being met by Fr. Elias Krenitsky. This vacancy will hopefully be filled by the 15th or 30th of September.

Upcoming parish celebrations were noted in Frackville (September 30th), Wilmington, DE. (November 4th) and the 100th Anniversary in Old Forge next year. His Grace asked that the diocesan parishes support one another in their efforts for these anniversaries.

Bishop HERMAN thanked all of the parishes for their help and support for this past Memorial Day celebration. He reported that the Bi-Centennial of Orthodoxy in North America will be celebrated here at St. Tikhon's. All will be called upon to help. He also expressed his thanks to everyone for their cooperation during the past year. He especially thanked Fr. Daniel Donlick for his efforts in spite of health problems.

His Grace expressed his desire to see a renewal in the entire Diocese. Some parishes are still slow and inactive. This has to change.

Bishop HERMAN noted the presence of the Holy Synod at St. Tikhon's for Memorial Day. Many things need to be done for our growth in order to do the work of Christ. This work is the responsibility of everyone. The Holy Synod established the theme, "PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE." In light of this theme, His Grace exhorted all present to first look at themselves, accept what they see and then make changes necessary for the growth of the Church. This growth can and will come about only if we do something. These same ideas were confirmed by the Lesser Synod as well. His Grace noted that no matter how long it takes, we will see the dedication of the faithful to build up the Church.

REPORT OF THE DIOCESAN COUNCIL SECRETARY

It was noted by Fr. Martin that the report of the Diocesan Council Secretary has been included in the delegate packet. There being no questions on the report, Paula Lahutsky moved to accept the report,

seconded by Fr. John Udics. Motion carried.

REPORT OF THE DIOCESAN TREASURER

Fr. Donlick noted that his report was included in the packet. The report for January 1, 1990 - June 30, 1990 was distributed to the delegates. The cash balance for the period totaled \$64,012.88 and was reviewed by Fr. Donlick.

Fr. Donlick reported that the Diocese makes a payment of \$16,688.00 to the National Church on a monthly basis whether or not the parishes have transmitted their payment to the Diocese. Approximately 90% of the Diocesan parishes transmit their payments to the Diocese on a timely basis. He asked those parishes that do not transmit payments on a timely basis to the Diocese, to please do so in order to prevent a cash flow problem in the Diocese.

Fr. Donlick stated that Mr. Lewis Saras, CPA now takes care of the auditing due to the ill-health of Stanley Stoy, CPA.

REPORT OF THE DIOCESAN AUDITORS

Mr. Gene Haverlak reported that all was found to be in proper order. He read the report of the Auditors.

A motion was made by Fr. Neal Carrigan seconded by Mr. John Zoransky to accept both the Treasurer's and Auditor's Reports. Motion carried.

DEANERY REPORTS

The Deanery reports were included in the delegate packet. There being no questions, additions, or corrections to the reports, a motion was made by Fr. Andrew Shuga to accept the reports as presented, seconded by Fr. Elias Krenitsky. Motion carried.

DIOCESAN DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

A. Religious Education

The report was included in the delegate packet. There were no questions of the report.

B. Department of Missions

Reports from the two Diocesan Missions, Williamsport and Wrightstown, were included in the delegate packet. There were no questions on the reports.

C. Department of Publications/Public Relations

Fr. John Kowalczyk commented on his report noting that an interview with Bishop HERMAN during a Pro-Life Rally will probably be part of a documentary to be televised nationally in the Fall 1990.

D. Department of Insurance

Marie Hudock commented on her report included in the delegate packet. Presently, there are 620 subscribers in the Medical Insurance Program and 445 subscribers in the Life Insurance Program. She reported that we now have family coverage for full-time students to age 23.

As of July 1, 1990, 68 clergy of the Carpatho-Russian Diocese will join the Life Insurance Program. The Greek Archdiocese has requested to become part of the the Health Insurance Program as of October 1, 1990 with 400-plus members.

With well over 1,000 members in the group, our plan should have a favorable credibility factor. The increase in premium base will be to our advantage.

Bishop HERMAN commended Marie for her work in the Life and Health Insurance Program. His Grace expressed his thanks to her on behalf of the Diocese and the National Church.

E. Department of Youth

The report of the department was distributed by Mr. Martin Paluch. Fr. John Onofrey noted that this year is the 20th Anniversary of Martin's work at St. Tikhon's Summer Camp. Fr. John encouraged everyone to better support the camp by advertising it more heavily in the parishes.

F. Department of Lay Ministry & Stewardship

In that the department is currently without a chairman, no report was given.

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL REPORT

The report was part of the delegate packet.

Fr. John Maxwell asked about funding of Mission parishes by the Department of Missions as per Fr. Dimitri Oselinsky's suggestion to fund just a few missions with a larger amount of money. Bishop HERMAN noted that this is being studied by the Department of Missions and the Synod of Bishops.

Responding to a question on the National Church Assessment, His Grace encouraged the parishes that have not sent in the financial survey form to the National Church, to please do so. Only about 50% of all parishes have responded. Bishop HERMAN noted a good response from our Diocese. A full report of the survey should be ready for the Fall Synod Meeting.

Adjustments had to be made in budgeting expenditures in the National Church budget. The total budget was not changed, but departmental budgets were adjusted.

A motion was made by Fr. Gregory Horton to accept all of the reports, seconded by Fr. Vladimir Fetcho. Motion carried.

Bishop HERMAN noted that the Diocese should consider making a contribution to the Pennsylvania Council of Churches, especially in light of the fact that we are a member of the Council and our Diocese receives a great deal of correspondence from the Council. Fr. Daniel Ressetar is His Grace's representative to the Council.

There are also talks underway to co-sponsor a conference with Archbishop Bevilaqua of the Roman Catholic Church concerning unfavorable media coverage of the Churches. Bishop HERMAN noted the close-working ties with Archbishop Bevilaqua. He also spoke of a need for funds to pay the portion of our responsibility in the Philadelphia Council of Churches.

Before the break for lunch, Bishop HERMAN appointed Fr. Vladimir Petorak to be the receiver of resolutions to be considered by the Assembly. The Assembly broke for lunch at 12:35 p.m.

The afternoon session was called to order at 1:45 p.m. with Mr. Jacob Barsigian chairing the session. Bishop HERMAN set the tone of the remainder of the Assembly with his talk -- THE MISSION OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA. (Text attached). Members of the Church School Teacher's Conference being held in conjunction with the Assembly were present for the talk.

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 1991

Fr. Eugene Vansuch presented the following information concerning the Diocesan UNITED APPEAL. In his presentation, he noted that the Diocese has lost 287 members since 1986. At the same time, the budget has increased over \$18,000. Assessments have not increased during that period. There has been little if any increase in salaries. Some program budgets have increased, some have decreased. Assessments bring in a great portion of the income, but the Diocese is still faced with a decrease in the census and an increase in the budget. Following extensive discussion, the Diocesan Council voted unanimously to recommend to the Diocesan Assembly the United Appeal.

In the past, there were two Diocesan-wide appeals, ie., the Mission Appeal and the Bishop's Discretionary Charity Appeal. Based upon monies received from these Appeals, there seemed to be no consistent way to distribute the envelopes. It is not known how each parish handled the envelopes distributed to them. Per-capita donations ranged from \$1.91 per parishoner in 1986 to \$2.45 per parishoner in 1989.

It was decided to supplement the budget with the UNITED APPEAL while retaining the \$10.00 per parishoner assessment. Instead of two Appeals, there will be one UNITED APPEAL by direct mail to all parishoners commencing with the New Liturgical Year - September 1st. Donations will be mailed directly to the Diocesan office. The Diocesan Council will be responsible to allocate the funds. The Diocesan Council feels confident that \$18,000 can be raised by the

Appeal to meet the proposed budget for 1991.

Fr. Vansuch reported that the proposed income for 1991 will consist of the following: 2% from the National Church Mission Allocation, 9% from the Diocesan magazine ads and subscriptions, 22% from the Diocesan UNITED APPEAL and 67% from the Diocesan Assessments.

The proposed expenses for 1991 were broken down in the following manner: 32% Administrative, 23% Diocesan Programs, 34% Diocesan Departments and 11% Diocesan Center.

Discussion followed which included the possible raising of the Diocesan Assessment. Some delegates expressed a desire to move in the direction of stewardship.

Fr. Vansuch presented the following resolution passed by the Diocesan Council:

"...Diocesan Council supports the recommendation of our diocesan hierarchy, Bishop HERMAN, that the present assessment of \$10.00 per person be retained and there be one DIOCESAN UNITED APPEAL, by direct mail to all Diocesan members which will encompass the present Diocesan Appeals, i.e. Missionary and Charity. The Diocesan Council will be responsible for allocating the funds. The time for conducting the Annual United Appeal will coincide with the beginning of the Church Year, September 1."

Fr. Vladimir Petorak moved to accept the recommendation of the Diocesan Council, seconded by Fr. John Perich. Motion carried.

Fr. David Lisko moved to accept the proposed budget for 1991, seconded by Mr. Ted Sovyrda. Motion carried.

ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS

Fr. Vladimir Petorak reported that there were no resolutions presented.

OTHER MATTERS

Fr. Gregory Horton raised the question of ecumenical relations. Bishop HERMAN answered that a full report was not yet made to the Holy Synod on this issue. The Holy Synod has discussed this issue at length, but nothing has been resolved. His Grace said that the Church needs to make a statement as to our stand on this issue after careful study. We want to avoid making a quick statement that will not be followed through.

The remainder of the Assembly was dedicated to an open-floor discussion of some of the points made by Bishop HERMAN in his earlier talk. Some of the areas of discussion included attention to personal prayer and prayer at liturgical services, the monastic calling and the importance of monasteries to the life of the entire Church.

In his concluding remarks, His Grace said that he would like to see the agendas of monthly parish meetings changed to include not only

finances and business matters, but the life of the church as well -- 'what is the spiritual side of the parish?' We need to ask, 'Who has fallen away from the parish and how can we get them back?'

Bishop HERMAN asked all of the delegates to make an evaluation of what took place at the Assembly, both the good and the bad.

He expressed his thanks to those who worked in the past year, to those who worked on his 25th Anniversary of Ordination celebration and to those who worked on this Assembly.

Fr. Donlick expressed his thanks to Matushka Dorothy Sulich for all her work for the Assembly and to those of the Seminary Staff who also assisted.

Fr. John Mason moved to adjourn the Assembly seconded by Fr. Daniel Kovalak. Motion carried.

The Assembly was adjourned with prayer and the blessing of Bishop HERMAN at 4:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Priest David Shewczyk

Priest David Shewczyk

Mrs. Marie Proch

Approved By

+ Bishop Herman

His Grace, Bishop Herman