

Assembly 2007

Miami, Florida

Minutes from the 2006 Assembly in Dallas, Texas

1st Plenary:

Called to order on Thursday, July 27 at 1:35 pm after the singing of "*O Heavenly King...*" Appointed by His Eminence:

Presidium: Gary Popovich

Secretariat: Fr. Basil Zebrun

His Eminence Archbishop Dmitri:

Began by emphasizing how delighted he was with the proceedings thus far. He then distinguished between the nature of this gathering and an All American Council: specifically a Diocesan Assembly is the bringing together of the *basic unit* of the Church: the bishop, his priests and deacons along with their respective flocks.

The Archbishop then spoke of the love that we must have for one another as brothers and sisters in Christ, recalling the words of pagans describing the lives of early Christians: "My, how they love one another." "If we can achieve that," said His Eminence, "we will have done something great."

Minutes:

Fr. Ernesto Rios made a motion that the minutes from the 2005 Assembly be accepted as presented. Fr. Peter Smith seconded the motion. **Passed unanimously.**

Financial Report:

Gary Popovich introduced Mr. Milos Konjevich the Diocesan Treasurer.

Milos directed everyone's attention to the Financial Report, page 2, the last paragraph which focused on the Diocese' ability to reduce the OCA Assessment for its Churches (*amount sent to the Diocese*) while still meeting its obligation to the OCA. This proposal was met with a "cautious" reaction from the Diocesan Council prior, and so the matter was tabled.

With regard to the report, "Tithe and Membership Assessment Trend Analysis," Mr. Konjevich explained the "TPCA Ratio," a designated number that demonstrates the strength of giving of each individual parish. The "TPCA Ratio" can be used in the future as one indicator of a community's status. Some discussion took place as well concerning the fact that the OCA and the Diocese of the South maintain two different financial "systems."

Pointing to the "Income Statement" Milos stressed that for the first time since 2001 the Diocese finished the year in the black, financially.

Discussions took place regarding the method by which parishes report their membership totals, as well as the OCA's recent loan and its impact, if any, on the Diocese.

Budget:

Responding to a suggestion from Fr. Ernesto Rios, Assembly participants then moved on to an examination of the 2007 Budget.

The Treasurer commented that this was the first time that he ever presented a "surplus budget."

Specifics:

It was noted that \$30,000 was transferred from the Education Fund for Fr. Joseph Fester to help develop a Diocesan Pastoral School, an effort to be coordinated with St. Tikhon's Seminary in South Canaan, Pennsylvania.

New, as well, was a \$40,000 allotment for an auxiliary bishop.

The line item for "bishop's travel" was increased to \$13,500.

Fr. David Rucker asked whether or not the Diocese will be reimbursed for mission money it did not receive over the past few years from the OCA. Fr. Joseph Fester clarified that money received from the OCA loan will be used, in part, to pay back the Dioceses whatever is owed. Matushka Jeanette Parker asked if the Diocese could forgive the OCA this amount. The possibility was considered. Fr. John Parker suggested that a letter to Syosset be written stating our good intentions with regard to this issue. Fr. Ernesto Rios made a *motion* to accept that suggestion. Cheryl Carden seconded the motion. **The motion passed with 1 individual opposed.**

Metropolitan Council/Missions Report:

Fr. Philip Reese and Mr. Gary Popovich were introduced as MC Representatives, but Mr. Popovich suggested that Fr. Ted Pisarchuk present his Mission's Report since he had to catch an early flight.

Fr. Ted apologized for the tone of his written report but he was responding to the feelings of the laity; his desire to let them know that he cares about their concerns. Fr. Pisarchuk did emphasize that he is inspired by the number of new communities in the Diocese.

Deanery Reports:

See written summaries handed out by:

Appalachian Deanery:	Fr. Stephen Freeman
Carolina Deanery	Fr. Marcus Burch
Central Florida Deanery	Fr. Mark Stephens
Southcentral Deanery	Fr. Basil Zebrun
Southeastern Deanery	Fr. Peter Smith
South Florida Deanery	Fr. Ernesto Rios

All of the Deans spoke briefly, highlighting certain items in their written reports.

Adjournment:

Just prior to adjourning the Archbishop clarified the meaning of the line item in the Budget for "Seminary," reiterating that this effort will be made in cooperation with St.

Tikhon's Seminary. Fr. Ernesto made the motion to adjourn the 1st Plenary; seconded by Fr. Peter Smith. **Passed unanimously.** Meeting adjourned at 3:45 pm with the singing of "*Meet It Is...*"

2nd Plenary

The 2nd Plenary was called to order on Friday, July 28, 2006 at 10:40 am after the singing of "*O Heavenly King...*"

His Eminence commented on next year's Assembly: Charleston as compared with other locations.

He also commented on the potential for an auxiliary bishop.

The Archbishop then recited the contents of a petition handed to him, consisting of three parts:

(A.) That the Diocesan Council endeavor to meet twice a year.

(B.) That agendas for the Diocesan Assembly and the Diocesan Council Meetings be distributed before the gatherings.

(C.) That in light of the current OCA situation, the Dallas Assembly establish a financial committee for "best practices" with legal counsel. The Archbishop asked that the staff of the Chancery in Dallas and known experts put something together.

Monastic Institutions:

Reports were given for the following:

Sts. Mary and Martha Monastery: Mother Thecla

St. Michael's Skete: Hieromonk John

Review of Assembly Sites:

Christ the Saviour Cathedral in Miami was chosen for 2007. Fr. Parker from Charleston, South Carolina agreed to this change given the status of his parish's building program.

St. Justin Martyr Church in Jacksonville, Florida was designated as the site for the 2007 Pastoral Conference.

Diocesan Council Elections:

Fr. Peter Smith made the motion that since the Diocesan Council did not meet in 2005 that current lay council members remain in place. Fr. Ernesto Rios seconded the motion.

Passed unanimously. Members are: Chuck Doten, Bruce Humphrey, E. Ray Lanier, Jeanette Parker, Ed Stickle, and Robert Vranes.

Metropolitan Council Elections:

Vladika suggested that Fr. Philip Reese and Mr. Gary Popovich be our representatives to the Metropolitan Council. Fr. Ernesto made the motion to accept. Fr. Peter Smith seconded. **Unanimously passed.**

The chair acknowledged the exemplary job done by St. Seraphim Cathedral and friends in hosting the 2006 Assembly.

Adjournment:

Fr. Peter Smith made the motion to adjourn. Fr. Ernesto Rios seconded the motion.

Passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 11:20 am after the singing of, "*Meet It Is...*"

Respectfully Submitted for Approval,

Fr. Basil Zebrun