

# DOS Assembly, Plenary Session II,

Miami Lakes, FL

October 7, 2021

(9 AM - 12 PM)



- 9:05 AM Singing of O'Heavenly King
- 9:08 AM Roll call and Attendance: Rdr James Gordon  
Credentials:  
2 Bishops  
54 Clergy Delegates +(8) via zoom  
39 Lay Delegates  
16 Observers
- 9:31 AM Audit Committee Report: Fr Gleb McFatter (update from 2019 & 2020)  
-Met with the Treasurer and Financial Secretary at the end of June, 2021  
-Expanded the scope for these two years to include all of the parishes and Institutions (a little over 53) that have balances in and deposits for loans with the DOS. We sent confirmation letters to all those and received 23 back. We are in the process now of reconciling those of any discrepancies and looking at any issues that have come to us regarding those accounts. We anticipate having a full report for both years at the Pastoral Conference in February, 2022.
- 9:33 AM Pension Plan Update: (Lay Vice Chair Chad Edwards)  
-Potential shortfall, investing in hedge funds, request to increase plan fund contributions to make up for the shortfall, discuss the resolution, resolve to withhold any increases and put them into escrow pending a complete actuarial review of the pension fund
- 9:37 AM Archpriest Joseph Ciarciaglino  
1. -The pension fund right now has a over \$30 million dollar liability, the plan is less than 50% funded, the fair value of the plan assets are just short of \$25 million dollars, at the minutes of the Metropolitan Council (Spring 2014 meeting) there is quote that the pension board reported plan being at 82% funded, by 2018 this was almost half to 41.67, Despite an increase in employee contributions this year of 25% (we keep saying a 2% increase;

2. that's 2% of the wages and accoutrements that report for the priests which in fact if you were paying 80% and you increased to 10 that's a 25% increase in the contribution) -Despite that increase which began this year the funding ratio will fall to 20.12 rather than .06% by 2049, the OCA requiring participation in the plan as a condition of employment is liable together with the parishes that employ the priests; all liable should the plan fail, it was a belief in the OCA that the OCA bore no liability in this
3. Actuarial Company (Milliman)
  - a. In December 2003 the plan was 100% funded with surplus of approximately \$2.5 million dollars
  - b. Sixteen years later the plan had a liability over \$30 million dollars and was less than 50% funded
  - c. In 2012 Milliman advised that the plan participate in a supposed hedge fund entitled Milliman Asset Protection
  - d. By December of 2016 that participation resulted in a loss to the plan of \$3.3 million dollars
  - e. Milliman's fees for allowing participation by the plan was \$243,000; no claim was ever made by the plan against Milliman for actuarial malpractice, nor was it ever examined
  - f. Milliman has not been immune from such lawsuits; the Maryland Pension and Retirement Fund successfully sued Milliman for actuarial malpractice and won a judgement of over \$73 million dollars
  - g. Despite the descent of the plan fund from fully funded to less than 50% funded; the planboard continues to utilize and pay for the services of Milliman
  - h. Obtained a quote from Cheiron; they will do an actuarial audit of this year for \$20,000; the yearly fee will be a base of \$40,000
  - i. Advise that we don't withhold contributions that we are currently obligated for
  - j. What do we do about an increase should one come; pay to the DOS in escrow until the pension board agrees to an independent actuarial audit of the whole plan
  - k. Can participation of 370 people support a pension that has the kind of benefits that the OCA pension plan does?
  - l. What percentage of the fund is solely invested in stocks?
  - m. They do have sufficient assets to pay out the benefits that are due over the next year and a half without having to liquidate other assets

9:54 AM

Fr Peter Robichau

-We have a resolution that the Diocesan Council has drafted to review

9:55 AM

Discussion:

1. Fr Philip Beiner (St. Stephen the Protomartyr) - What jurisdiction governs the agreement with the actuarial company (whether it's NY or wherever). Is there a talk of statute of limitations and bringing action at this time? Fr Joseph Ciarciaglino: No
2. Robert Brooks (Ss.Peter and Paul) -
  - a. Does the Metropolitan Council have an investment policy? Did these investments follow that investment policy or did we leave it all just to autopilot?
  - b. I thought an actuarial company gave you reports on your actual pension plan and whether or not it can cover its liability going forward. But they also made the investment decisions? Fr Joseph Ciarciaglino: No. Changed a while back from Morgan Stanley
  - c. How often are these reviewed? Fr Joseph Ciarciaglino: They should be reviewed every year. The last review we got that was current was 2019, just received one from 2020
  - d. Is it an independent review or is it a review that is done by them? Fr Joseph Ciarciaglino: It's usually audits done by your actuarial company
3. Fr Joseph Ciarciaglino:
  - a. In 2010 they went to a 3-tiered retirement plan. The first tier was those who were brought in when the plan started. There was no time of required service. People retired with maybe five years of service and got full payment/pension. That is still a drag on the pension fund.
4. Joshua Godbold (Holy Transfiguration) -
  - a. Do people understand the scandal that this is and the potential that priests will be severely underfunded? Fr Joseph Ciarciaglino: In order to fix it you must know what's wrong with it and we can't say we know how we got here and how to prevent it from happening again
5. Fr John Cox (Holy Ascension) -
  - a. You mentioned in 2003 that the pension was reported as being fully funded and now it's 40% funded. Have you been shown detailed investment and financial reports year over year going back that far that allow us to construct some kind of idea as to when things began to change or what the causes were? Fr Joseph Ciarciaglino: No. There are some graphs they supply and show you generally from year to year what's current in the investments. Next step is to look at their investment portfolio report
6. Fr Basil Biberdorf (St Nektarios) -
  - a. Mission not currently paying. He is funding a 401K for himself.

- b. To what degree should parishes that are not currently participating, to what degree should they be doing that if this is simply being mismanaged on a scale that you have brought up? Fr Joseph Ciarciaglino: Pension Plan states that everybody has to participate that is being paid and that the parish has to make its contributions even if their priest is not participating and calculate their parish percentages and send that in
- 7. Terry Mattingly (St. Anne) -
  - a. Has anyone calculated how much the baby boom will increase the demands of the fund over the next five to ten years? Fr Joseph Ciarciaglino: That's put into the formulas but one of the big problems is the priests are coming to the vocation later in life which means the pay less into it; ultimate benefits are based upon years of service
- 8. Justin Patterson (St. Athanasius) -
  - a. We have to be committed to our priests who are about to retire, and support them as we fix the problem. Fr Joseph Ciarciaglino: There is no danger at all of benefits not being paid for now

10:12 AM

Chancellor Marcus Burch:

- We are fully supportive of the OCA and Archbishop Alexander. We are doing this because we love and support all of our priests in the OCA.

- 9. Julie Gould (Holy Ascension) -
  - a. She would like to build houses for all of you (Benedict Style) retirement village somewhere as a discussion for later
- 10. Maureen Jury (St. Seraphim Cathedral) -
  - a. If we withhold additional funding among the other dioceses, what is the appetite to do the actuarial audit and what can we do to unify the diocese? Fr Joseph Ciarciaglino: That will take effort to nudge the Holy Synod to agree to have this independent audit
  - b. So are our other dioceses doing a similar resolution as this or are we out in front once again? Fr Peter Robichau: We as an Diocesan Council, Bishops Council, have been expressing our concern, writing letters to the pension board, writing letters to the Metropolitan Council. It is not adversarial, voice concern in a public way in an official manner, and enlist that support with dialogue and discussion

10:16 AM

Fr Gleb McFatter (Chairman of the Pension Board)

- 1. Pension plan is underfunded (especially since collapse 2008)
- 2. OCA pension fund is stable, it's not in crisis at this time
- 3. We are paying benefits and expenses on time

4. There are 18 months of liquidity in the plan to pay benefits if the markets start to decline
5. We will not be forced to sell equities or other investment to pay benefits
6. 97% of the benefits paid are coming from contributions
7. 3% are coming from investment
8. At September 30th the pension portfolio assets are \$27,993,000.00
9. Rate of return for 2020 so far year to date is 7.59% which is slightly larger than our benchmark of 7%
10. There are many priests, even in the DOS, who have retired and are receiving benefits
  - a. Matushka Rios (Fr Ernesto's wife)
  - b. Matushka Perdomo (Fr Antonio's wife)
  - c. Fr Peter Smith
  - d. Fr Stephen Freeman
  - e. (In January 2022) Fr Thomas Moore
11. The participation in the plan overall is 94%
12. The Diocese of the West is 98%
13. The Diocese of Western Pennsylvania is 86%
14. The institutions and Diocese under His Beatitude is 100%
15. New England 100%
16. New York 100%
17. Diocese of the South 80%

10:21 AM      Resolution: Lay Vice Chair Chad Edwards  
**-Resolution to Hold Pension plan contribution increases in Escrow until Completion of an Independent Actuarial Evaluation of Pension Plan.**

*Whereas, the Diocesan Council is authorized by the Statute of the Orthodox Church in America, Article X, Section 6, to examine and verify financial records and reports, oversee the management and disposition of all Diocesan investments and property, and attend to legal matters affecting the interest and welfare of the Diocese;*

*Whereas, the Diocese of the South has a duty as an employer to exercise due diligence in ensuring its employees' pension plan is reasonably managed and funded;*

*Whereas, legitimate concerns have been raised over a potential funding shortfall in the pension plan;*

*Therefore, it is resolved that the 2021 Diocesan Assembly, with the blessing of its Hierarchy, recommends and authorizes that the Diocese of the South hold future pension plan contribution increases in escrow at least until the completion of an independent actuarial evaluation of the pension plan (at which time the DOS Diocesan Council will review said evaluation and recommend next steps).*

*Approved this Seventh Day of October 2021.*

10:24 PM

Fr Jason Foster:

-What we are not saying is withholding the entire pension payment as Fr Gleb said that 97% of potential plan payout is based on the amount that is donated through the pension plan. We are talking about the 2% increase that may be on the entire payment.

Fr Daniel Hickman:

-Does this mean that we are going to send out the other 2% to the diocese? So my parish would pay the OCA 8% and pay 2% to the diocese? Fr Marcus Burch: It's not being paid to the diocese, it's going to be held in escrow by the diocese. Fr Peter Robichau: There is no ask for an additional 2% (this is in anticipation of)

Fr Justin Patterson:

-We are hoping that this will spur the OCA pension board to make some changes and research what is going on. If we withhold that money will it imperil our clergy and widows?

Fr Marcus Burch:

-This is for any future increases. 97% of the benefits paid are coming from contributions.

Maureen Jury:

Everything that has happened today in terms of where you send the checks and how you send the checks is unchanged, however, if a 2% should come in the future, we are going to put it in escrow so nothing changes in terms of this resolution

Fr Marcus Burch:

In addition to this resolution at our Bishops Council and Diocesan Council meetings, His Eminence is also going to send a letter to His Beatitude and entire Holy Synod of Bishops asking that this review be done as a second item

Fr Thomas Moore

-The crisis is not until 2049 and we are planning so that doesn't happen

Fr Peter Robichau:

-97% is coming from current contributions from parishes and priests which means we are not realizing the compounded interest potential of contributions into the fund and therefore we are not participating in the upsides when they happen by adding more principle to our fund. We are relying on returns of investments and reinvestments only which is concerning. Again, these are simply warning signs along the way and how can we address this. Most pension funds anywhere are not sustainable just by the way they have not panned out (police departments, school

districts, states and all other areas.

Fr Jason Foster

-Our hope is not to have to set up an escrow account to start receiving these other payments. The hope is when those who need to receive those type of resolution read it they'll meet us at the table and we can discuss and negotiate it before they ever implement another increase

Fr Andrew Cannon

-Would love to support retired priests. Is there any discussion about making this not mandatory and looking for another option that might be sustainable beyond?

10:31 AM     **Motion to approve Resolution: Fr John Cox**  
**Second: Joshua Godbold**  
**Motion passed unanimously**

**Motion to Break**

---

10:47 AM     Back to Order

10:48 AM     Elections-

- 1) Met Council Nominations:
  - a) Serve as many as three years
  - b) Renewed every year at the DOS Assembly
  - c) By statute elected for a three year term
    - i) Fr Joseph Ciarciaglino term coming to an end
    - ii) Christopher Lewis term coming to an end
- 2) Nominations for Metropolitan Council and Clergy Position
  - a) Clergy: Fr Joseph Ciarciaglino
    - i) First: Fr Sergious Gerken
    - ii) Motion to close nominations: Sandy Buckman
    - iii) Motion Approved Unanimously
  - b) Lay Representative: Sdn Joshua Godbold
    - i) First: Fr Marcus Burch
    - ii) Second: Fr Sergious Gerken
    - iii) Motion Approved Unanimously

10:58 AM

Elections- Deanery Meetings: need Delegate & Alternate - Diocesan Council - Name and Email of each:

(Alternate is only called into service if the delegate acn no longer serve)

**South Florida**

Dean Priest Joseph Lucas  
Christ the Saviour Cathedral, Miami Lakes  
[joseph.lucas@orthodoxmiami.org](mailto:joseph.lucas@orthodoxmiami.org)  
(305) 332-4454

Delegate Elena Voronkova  
Christ the Saviour Cathedral, Miami Lakes  
[evv2310@gmail.com](mailto:evv2310@gmail.com)  
561-305-0604

Alternate Robert Brookes  
Ss. Peter and Paul Church  
[robertbrookes@yahoo.com](mailto:robertbrookes@yahoo.com)  
(305) 297-7601

**Carolinas**

Dean Priest John Cox  
Holy Ascension, Mt. Pleasant  
[frjohncox@gmail.com](mailto:frjohncox@gmail.com)  
(757) 339-2067

Delegate Genevieve Lyday  
Holy Cross, Greensboro  
[jlyday@waldrepwall.com](mailto:jlyday@waldrepwall.com)  
(336) 608-8899

Alternate Tim Shadle  
Holy Transfiguration, Raleigh  
[TimShadle1977@gmail.com](mailto:TimShadle1977@gmail.com)  
(919) 349-7449

**Southcentral**

Dean: Priest Photius Avant  
St. Sava, Allen  
[stsavatx@gmail.com](mailto:stsavatx@gmail.com)  
(469) 667-6366

Delegate Maureen Jury  
St. Seraphim of Sarov, Dallas  
[maureenajury@gmail.com](mailto:maureenajury@gmail.com)  
(972) 467-0020

Alternate Reader Stephen Bodnarchuk  
St. Barbara, Fort Worth  
[stephenjean@att.net](mailto:stephenjean@att.net)



(817) 291-1421

### North Florida

Dean Archpriest Ted Pisarchuk  
St. Justin Martyr, Jacksonville  
[ted.pisarchuk@gmail.com](mailto:ted.pisarchuk@gmail.com)  
(904) 880-7671

Delegate Bertina Busch  
St. Stephen the Protomartyr, Orlando  
[bertina@buschandcompany.com](mailto:bertina@buschandcompany.com)  
(407) 758-2224

Alternate Subdn James Abraham  
St. Mark, Bradenton  
[jim.abraham51@gmail.com](mailto:jim.abraham51@gmail.com)  
(336) 337-1147

### Mississippi

Dean: Priest Jason Foster  
Nativity of the Lord Mission, Shreveport  
[frjasonfoster@gmail.com](mailto:frjasonfoster@gmail.com)  
(318) 455-4219

Delegate Carson Chittom  
Holy Resurrection, Clinton  
[Carson@wistly.net](mailto:Carson@wistly.net)  
(601) 316-5106

Alternate Mat Deborah Maxwell  
Ss. George and Alexandra, Fort Smith  
[frjohnmaxwell@sbcglobal.net](mailto:frjohnmaxwell@sbcglobal.net)  
(479) 462-6300

### Appalachian

Dean: Archpriest David Arnold  
St. Cyprian of Carthage, Midlothian  
[priest@stcyprianoca.org](mailto:priest@stcyprianoca.org)  
(804) 317-2879

Delegate Chad Edwards  
Dormition of the Theotokos, Norfolk  
[chad.l.edwards@gmail.com](mailto:chad.l.edwards@gmail.com)  
(208) 874-2256

Alternate Mat Tamara Patterson  
St. Athanasius, Nicholasville  
[tamara.j.patterson@gmail.com](mailto:tamara.j.patterson@gmail.com)

Alternate Terry Mattingly  
(at Assembly) [tmatt@tmatt.net](mailto:tmatt@tmatt.net)  
(865) 386-4264

### Southeastern

Dean Archpriest Alexander Fecanin  
St. Symeon the New Theologian, Birmingham  
[fecanin@yahoo.com](mailto:fecanin@yahoo.com)  
(205) 907-9447

Delegate Reader James M. Gordon  
St. Symeon the New Theologian, Birmingham  
[jmgordon1969@att.net](mailto:jmgordon1969@att.net)  
(205) 601-6909

Alternate Mr. Colin Croft  
St. Innocent, Macon  
[stoneworkercmc@yahoo.com](mailto:stoneworkercmc@yahoo.com)  
(478) 451-8099

10:58 AM Reports:

1. **Appalachian:** Fr David Arnold
  - a. Establishing beginnings of two new missions
    - i. (St. Nina) Help from Fr Justine Patterson and St. Athanasius
    - ii. (St Peter & Paul) Fr Adam Sexton, in initial stages, Culpepper, VA
2. **Carolina:** Fr Thomas Moore
  - a. Fr Thomas is no longer the Dean, Fr John Cox elected
  - b. In the past 20 years we have gone from 4 missions to 16 churches with 2 potential missions
3. **Southcentral:** Bishop Gerasim
  - a. Bishop Gerasim is no longer the Dean, elected Fr Photius Avant
  - b. Ministry of Fr Benedict Crawford, the Woodlands - mission is growing
  - c. Fr Nicholas Aeilo - turned the corner after a few rough years when people moved away
  - d. 20th Anniversary of St Maximus Church - wonderful choir and lots of children, creating of new temple in a college town
  - e. Fr Basil Biberdorf - participating in summer camp, helping at other parishes
  - f. Fr Chrysostom and Fr Zebrun - always steady
4. **North Florida:** Fr Ted Pisarchuk
  - a. Welcome Fr John Colcher to St. Marks
  - b. Welcome to Fr Philip Beiner - planting a church in Kissimmee, FL, up to 50 people already in four months
  - c. Fr Sergious Gerken - Working over three years to plant a village mission, having vespers, fastest growing MSA in the United States in the last ten years
  - d. Fr Daniel Hickman - planting russian mission in Orlando (St. Nina)
  - e. Fr Andrei Syrkin - moving out their community, have their foundation, new facility in January 2022
5. **South Florida:** Fr Joseph Lucas
  - a. Fr Leonid Palceski retired September 17, 2021

- b. Welcome into the Deanery Fr George Volkovinsky and Matuska Larissa, in Ft Myers
  - c. Fr Philp Reese retired from the Cathedral in 2018. He retired as a chaplain at the Veterans Hospital September 1, 2021. Still filling in at Ss. Peter & Paul
  - d. Mission Station in Vero Beach was put on hold for the time being
  - e. Key's mission is back, new orthodox family moved from California
  - f. Building plans for the Cathedral ; expanding parking lots, ways to expand the front of the church
6. **Mississippi:** Fr Jason Foster
- a. Fr David Bozeman - beautification of their temple project, tremendous growth
  - b. Fr Paul Fetsko and Fr John Maxwell are in the process of a parish hall renovation
  - c. Fr John Weihling has surgery on his achilles tendon
  - d. Fr Mark Sutton going well, steady
  - e. Fr Joshua Trant had a storefront church for years, process of building
  - f. Fr Alexis Baldwin is running the circuit
  - g. Hattiesburg Mission has a church under contract
  - h. Thankful for partnership with the Dallas Deanery
  - i. All Saints Summer Camp had the largest camp they have ever had this past year
7. **Monasteries:** (Mother Thekla for Ss. Mary & Martha)
- a. Reached a milestone at this year: been on the property for 25 years as of June 11
  - b. Always looking for vocations
  - c. Please support all three deaneries
  - d. Candle orders during shortfall fell off, but orthodox and unorthodox individuals called looking for candles for their own personal prayer room, the little orders made up for the big orders, Mother Helena always faithful as their candle maker
  - e. Receiving visitors now, scheduled out thru middle of November and beyond
  - f. Cemetery has 109 people, many stories from many countries and different backgrounds
  - g. No work groups coming back yet
  - h. Restarted clergy wives retreat this year
  - i. Interior of Chapel is complete as well as the sun room and have started the second third of the building (bigger than the first third)

11:41 AM

Announcement: Joshua Godbold

-Serving with the Bishop - if interested in annotated videos contact him directly

[van.godbold@ieee.org](mailto:van.godbold@ieee.org)

(919) 460-5363

-Create building plans when parishes face building that we take some of the uncertainty out, lessons learned from others, electronic depository

11:44 AM      Upcoming Meetings:

1. Pastoral Conference - February 21-24, 2022 at Sava's in Allen, Texas
2. 2022 DOS Assembly at the 20th AAC - July 18-22, 2022 in Baltimore, Maryland
3. 2023 DOS Assembly - July 17-21, 2023 at St. John of the Ladder in Greenville, SC

Adjournment:

Fr. Marcus adjourned the meeting at the movement of Fr. Thomas Moore and the unanimous approval of those assembled @ 11:50 AM.

Closing "It is truly meet..."