

PRESBYTERAL COUNCIL MEETING NOTES
Tuesday, August 13, 2019

Members Present: Bishop John, Fathers Terrance Klein, Chuck Mazouch, Ted Skalsky, Anselm Eke, Aneesh Parappanattu and Mark Brantley

Excused Absent: Father Bob Schremmer

Guest: Eric Haselhorst

Pastoral Office

Election of PC Officers:

Chair – Fr. Chuck Mazouch

Vice Chair – Fr. Ted Skalsky

Secretary – Fr. Aneesh Parappanattu

Flock Notes (Eric Haselhorst)

Several parishes in the diocese have subscribed to Flock Notes as a means to communicate with their parishioners (via text, phone or email). Flock Notes is a “permission based” service, that is, people opt-in: “I want to hear from you.” People who sign up choose the categories of information they wish to receive (such as general information, ministry reminder, specific commissions/committees, etc.).

Recently, a pastor raised the question of whether it would be possible to get a diocesan subscription to Flock Notes. After discussion among the members, the consensus was Flock Notes is already reasonably priced and a diocesan subscription is not needed unless the diocese feels it needs this tool in order to provide information throughout the entire diocese.

Smaller parishes may want to look at “Diocesan” (diocesan.org) for an alternative communication product to Flock Notes.

Digitizing Prenuptial Forms and Annulment Forms (Sr. Janice)

A pastor recently asked whether we have considered having electronic prenuptial and annulment forms available. Sr. Janice explained consideration has been given in the past but never implemented.

After conversation among the members, there did not seem to be much of a desire to have electronic forms. However, it was agreed some priests might find this to be helpful.

We found out somewhat recently in the Diocese of Wichita they had made electronic forms available only to the priests (via an email with the forms attached). Sr. Janice will follow up with the priest in Wichita who facilitated this and find out how they digitized the forms and what feedback has been received.

Teaching Office

“A Continuous and Profound Conversion of Hearts” (Bishop John)

This USCCB document contains four items:

- *Vos estis lux mundi*, Pope Francis’ motu proprio Apostolic Letter concerning child sexual abuse, its reporting and investigation when a bishop is accused (effective June 1, 2019)

- USCCB “Directives for the Implementation of *Vos estis lux mundi* Concerning Bishops and Their Equivalents” (approved by full body of bishops June 2019)
- “Affirming our Episcopal Commitments” (approved by full body of bishops June 2019)
- “Protocol Regarding Available non-Penal Restrictions on Bishops” (approved by full body of bishops June 2019)

Comments and questions of the members:

- How will a lay person know where to go to report? Communication will be key. Perhaps in our own diocesan information on how to report child sexual abuse a line could be added, “If the accusation is against a bishop, call _____.”
- What are the “next steps” if/when a bishop is credibly accused? Neither the universal norms nor the USCCB directives mention any restrictions on a bishop that would likely be implemented if a priest were credibly accused (restrictions such as exclude from ministry or office, impose or forbid residence, etc.)
- Should there be a provision whereby if a bishop is credibly accused an administrator is appointed for the duration of the investigation? In this way, the bishop would retain the office but would not be functioning.

One of the models for reporting is the “Metropolitan Model” wherein an accusation would be reported to that bishop’s metropolitan bishop. If the metropolitan bishop is accused, the senior suffragan bishop receives the report.

Bishop John will be participating in a conference call on August 14 which will include all metropolitan bishops and senior suffragan bishops. The Kansas bishops will be meeting next week and will also be talking about this.

Evangelization with Joy: Consultation with the Faithful (Bishop John)

At the spring presbyteral assembly, Bishop John requested the pastors to ask his parishioners: What is bearing fruit? What is not bearing fruit that needs fertilized? What is not bearing fruit that may need to die? Bishop suggested giving these questions to pastoral council members, finance council members, perhaps members of other councils and commissions. Or, perhaps the pastor could elicit feedback from his parishioners via a survey.

Comments from council members:

- I gave the “bearing fruit” questions to my council members and they are to respond by the end of August.
- I already asked these questions last November but now need to revisit.
- Gave questions to all councils; will put the questions in the bulletin and ask to bring back responses in two weeks.

Bishop John will send a reminder email to all priests of his desire for feedback from the faithful. Bishop will include a sample survey as well.

Evangelization with Joy: Fall Convocation (Bishop John)

Convocation will be a three-day gathering (October 8-10). We will present all the information gathered thus far (from priests, chancery staff and the faithful). The hope is to come away with three key directions.

Next meeting is Tuesday, September 17, 2019