



Diocese of Oakland

Presbyteral Council Meeting

Thursday, November 21, 2019 – 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Bishop's Residence

President:

The Most Reverend Bishop Michael Barber, SJ

Members Present: Frs. Carl Arcosa; John Carillo; Paul Coleman; Quang Dong; Leo Edgerly; Rafael Hinojosa; John Kasper, OSFS; Sergio Mora; Bich Nguyen; Ray Sacca; Paul Vassar

Members Absent: Frs. George Alengadan; Gerald Pedrera; Sergio Lopez; George Mockel; Mark Wiesner

Others Present: Fr. Kevin Schindler-McGraw; Mr. Paul Bongiovanni; Mr. Bill Ford; Ms. Kathleen Radecke; Mr. Steven Wilcox

Prayer: Bishop Barber led the Council in prayer

Approval of Minutes – October 17, 2019

Corrections to the minutes were entered. The move to approve the minutes as corrected was seconded by Fr. Ray Sacca. Minutes, with correction, were unanimously accepted *viva voce*.

Election of Officers

Before initiating the election of officers, Fr. Kevin Schindler-McGraw, OFM Conv pointed out that the required quorum of three quarters of all members plus one was not present and suggested “quorum” should be re-defined to bring it in line with current standards.

Bishop Barber queried what could be done to change it. Fr. Kevin indicated the Council could make a proposal to change the Statutes and vote on it but also indicated that, as president, Bishop Barber can change the legislation.

Fr. Paul Vassar suggested they abrogate and proceed.

Bishop Barber chose to wait in case another member arrives.

CYO Discussion

Bishop Barber shared he has received complaints regarding inappropriate scheduling of CYO events on Sunday mornings and, at times, during the entire day. He reported that other dioceses, like the Archdiocese of Detroit, are shifting away from scheduling any CYO events on Sundays.

Fr. Paul Vassar asked for clarification on whether the events in question were scheduled for Sunday morning or for other times on Sunday.

Steve Wilcox said that one of the complaints was based on the gym at De La Salle being opened at 11:45am. However, the gym was not opened at that time for a game but rather for the staff to prepare the gym. He pointed out there were also complaints about graduation being held on Sunday.

Bill Ford distributed copies of the *CYO Athletic Manual* and the *2019-2020 Basketball Rules of Note* which clearly states on page 12 that no games are allowed before noon on Sundays or at all during the Triduum. He will amend that stipulation if the start time needs to be later e.g. a parish may have a later morning Mass that would not end prior to noon. He pointed out, however, that some players play in outside leagues that are not bound by this stipulation.

Bill indicated that he seldom receives complaints and highlighted CYO's three-point emphasis (referenced on page 3 of the *CYO Athletic Manual*);

1. Spirituality; games begin with prayer
2. Service; teams do service projects
3. Sportsmanship

Fr. Ray Sacca voiced the same level of concern over practices that are held during Faith Formation classes, forcing the children to have to make a decision between sport participation and Faith Formation. He has voiced his concern and is going to make the gym unavailable if the coaches do not cooperate.

Bill said they encourage evening practices and CYO is instructed to yield to Faith Formation classes. If the problem persists, he may have to talk to the Athletic Directors. Bill reviews all game schedules but local parishes administer practices. However, if there are problems, the pastors will get support from Bill.

Fr. Carl Arcosa pointed out the parishes are also dealing with outside sport leagues.

Fr. Rafael Hinojosa indicated his confirmation conflicted with volleyball and people would not cooperate.

Fr. Leo Edgerly said that club sports have tournaments that interfere with religious activities and it is hard to get the children to choose. Many athletes feel they must have club sport experience to play in a Catholic High School.

Fr. Paul Vassar said that coaches are with a club so pick club players. The larger issue is conflict, not only with club sports, but with other outside activities as well and wonders if we can accommodate the other pressures put on children; if we can provide alternatives.

Fr. Leo stated that he moved his Confirmation class to Sunday morning after the 8am Mass but that children must make the decision and Fr. Paul Coleman agreed.

Bishop Barber supported the concern by recounting his experience of being invited to preside at a First Communion during which the father left for a time to attend a sporting event for his other child.

Fr. John Kasper, OSFS understand that everyone recognizes the quality of the CYO program and brought up that CYO eligibility requirements allow any child, Catholic or non-Catholic to participate as long as they lived within the parish boundaries. He states he has 500 children in his CYO program.

Fr. Leo Edgerly explained that in his parish, children cannot play unless they are participating in Faith Formation, be they Catholic or non-Catholic.

Bill Ford pointed out the wonderful evangelization opportunity CYO presents. Games are played at a parish and begin with prayer; parishes are encouraged to have a CYO Mass which provides a way to bring people in and exposes who we are as a Catholic community.

Fr. Paul Vassar expounded on that saying CYO's relationship to the broader community is very positive and welcoming, even to adults.

Steve Wilcox stated that at CCOP, the CYO registration form asks 1) if the registrant is a member, 2) if they would like to be a member and 3) if they would like more information.

Bishop Barber told of the Mormans building many churches in towns in Samoa, each having a basketball court. This proved to be an effective way to first, draw people to the grounds, and, in turn, set up an opportunity for further interaction.

Bishop Barber will communicate the CYO rules to the complainant.

Bill Ford closed by announcing the Vatican now has an Office of Sports, recognizing how powerful sport is in our experience.

2020 COLA Wage Increases

a. Calendar Year 2020 – Chancery/Parish

Paul Bongiovanni proposed a COLA increase of 2.5% based on the CPI for the San Francisco Bay Area from August, 2018 through August, 2019 and indicated the minimum and maximum pay scales would be updated.

Fr. Paul Vassar inquired about an increase for the retired priests and Paul Bongiovanni explained the table factors in a periodic increase for retired priests.

Fr. Carl Arcosa questioned if the priests really need an increase as they have housing, etc. provided. With declining collections, are they supposed to cut paid staff in order to accommodate the increase to the priests?

Fr. Ray Sacca pointed out that some priests are sending money to family overseas and suggested priests could be given the choice to opt out of the increase on an individual basis.

Bishop Barber suggested the Council vote on an increase for the lay and priests separately and Paul Bongiovanni indicated they have never been decoupled before.

Fr. Paul Vassar said we need to find a way to encourage priests to save for retirement and take responsibility for their future.

Paul Bongiovanni pointed out that prior to retirement, priests are provided room and board; they are on their own in retirement. New teacher hires in January will be encouraged to open a 403(b); priests could be encouraged to do the same.

Fr. Kevin Schindler-McGraw is meeting with Paul Bongiovanni and Carolyn Steel to formulate a retirement workshop for all priests which will touch on mental, emotional, spiritual and financial needs in retirement.

Fr. Carl Arcosa suggested young priests could be mentored to save for retirement.

Fr. Quang Dong supports the 2.5% increase for priests so they do not feel they have to get income from elsewhere and can focus on parish life.

Fr. Sergio Mora asked if the increase is mandated by law.

Paul Bongiovanni explained that, while we are not mandated by law, in justice we need to keep employees in the range; without it people will essentially be taking a pay cut. He favors cutting hours or eliminating positions in lieu of no increase.

Fr. Sergio Mora pointed out disparity among the parishes; some can afford to have paid positions and others must rely on volunteers to fill those same roles. It would be difficult to cut a staff of five down to three.

Fr. Carl Arcosa pointed out that some parishes are already in the red and when he was at Good Shepherd wages were not increased for a few years because they could not afford it.

Fr. Quang Dong pointed out that the cost of living is high and people are struggling.

Fr. Paul Coleman said the lay employees should get an increase because they have more living expenses than the priests.

Fr. Rafael Hinojosa supported decoupling the vote.

Bishop Barber suggested a proposal be made that priests do not have to take the increase. He expounded on Fr. Mora's point that there is a large discrepancy in the parishes; some have staffs of 25 and some have no paid staff. He also mentioned the USCCB took a vote on a parish tax increase which did not pass.

Fr. Paul Vassar moved to pass the lay employee wage increase of 2.5%; Fr. Carl Arcosa seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with a show of hands.

Fr. Paul Vassar moved to pass the priest salary increase of 2.5%; Fr. Sergio Mora seconded the motion with a choice to opt out. The motion passed unanimously with a show of hands.

b. Fiscal Year 2020/21 Schools Salary Scales

Kathleen Radecke, with the approval of the DCS School Board and Board Finance Committee, proposed a COLA increase of 2.7% for DCS employees. Also proposed is an additional .06% increase across the scales due to implementing the third year of a three-year plan to retain teachers, particularly those with 5 – 23 years of teaching experience, by bringing them to 90% parity with neighboring dioceses (San Jose and San Francisco). The COLA proposal is based on the CPI-Universal which includes professionals, etc., a standard they have been using for ten years.

Kathleen reports that people see we are trying and yet understand the sacrifice of being a Catholic school educator. She highlighted marketing strategies they are using to recruit teachers (Catholic induction program to help teachers clear their credential in five years; providing mentoring, etc.). She said Catholic Schools are the largest ministry in the diocese and there is need to retain seasoned teachers. She reported the new census shows that 82% of teachers are Catholic (up 1%) and 35% are Latino, also up.

For the average school, an increase of 2.7% represents an increase of approximately \$200/year/employee; the .06% increase is approximately a \$37 annual increase.

Paul Bongiovanni questioned other expenses, e.g. health care, and Kathleen said it was built into the figures.

Bishop Barber stated he trusted the Finance Committee and their assessment of possibly losing families due to the tuition increase and losing teachers due to not increasing salary. He asked about the student census and Kathleen stated there was a 2.5% drop in enrollment last year and a 2.9% drop this year. Bishop Barber shared that, nationally, enrollment is getting smaller every year.

Fr. Paul Vassar motioned we accept the schools increase as presented; Fr. Ray Sacca seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with a show of hands.

Fr. Paul Vassar commented that Catholic schools were first for the urban under-served but things have changed and Catholic high schools are not serving the Catholic community. He noted Xavier High School in Palm Desert is a private Jesuit sponsored school with an annual tuition of \$12,000 and questioned if our schools should be for the urban under-served or be private.

Bishop Barber said there are diocesan schools, schools administered by religious orders and schools administered by lay academics, with the blessing of the bishop. In answer to whether Catholic schools should minister to the urban under-served or be private, he indicated it was a tough call, citing that twenty-six states have government support for private schools. Regarding donations, he said that when asked, people will donate to an inner-city school with a proven track record but not to a school designated as a Catholic school.

Steve Wilcox suggested Rodney Pierre-Antione should be invited to give a report on Lumen Christi Schools to the Presbyteral Council.

New Business

Election of Officers

Fr. Paul Coleman was elected Chair; Fr. Leo Edgerly, Jr. was elected Vice-chair and Fr. Bich Nguyen was elected Secretary.

Housing for Retired Priests

Fr. Paul Vassar reported on the living arrangements of some of our retired priests. Some are living at parishes; some have personal housing; some own housing in which they live, or will live, when retired; some are at Bishop Begin Villa (which has limited space) and some are in assisted living.

Bishop Barber recognized the option of retired priests living at a parish possibly helping out. Regarding communal housing for retired priests, he is researching what is being done in neighboring dioceses. He gave the example of an instance in which diocesan property was sold with the provision that a portion of the condominiums developed on the property would be allotted to the diocese, providing housing for over 20 priests on the first two floors.

Comments from Bishop Barber

The diocese has reached a settlement on the Cathedral lawsuit. Work will include repairs on the chancery building to make it safe, restoring the parking and repairing the stabilizers at the base of the Cathedral. There will be no disruption in the Mausoleum and minimal disruption in the Cathedral and chancery. They hope to have it completed in one year.

The big issue at the USCCB meeting was the Bishop Accountability System. Plans are to implement a National Review Board by March 1, 2020.

Bishop Barber and Fr. George Mockel will travel to Rome the last week of January for the Ad Limina. They will meet with the Pope on January 26, 2020.

The USCCB elected officers at their recent meeting. Archbishop Jose H. Gomez was elected President and Archbishop Allen Vigneron was elected Vice-president.

The USCCB approved the election videos on social justice and Catholic social policy.

Bishop Robert Barron's *Word on Fire* program looks at the problem of young people leaving the church and makes suggestions on what we can do about it. Bishop Barron speaks of Missionary Disciples and gives five recommendations. Bishop Barber would like to implement *Word on Fire* in the diocese. Fr. Leo Edgerly suggested we bring it into the parish via the Faith Formation program but, although Bishop Barber advocates parishes use new materials, they want to use the old materials.

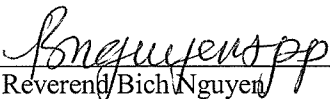
Additional Comments – Ongoing Formation of Priests

Fr. Kevin Schindler-McGraw, OFM Conv, reported that he will be moving forward with adding another annual preached retreat at Villa Maria Del Mar.

The presentation of the proposal to increase the cost of priest retreats from \$500 to \$750 is tabled.

Meeting Adjourned: 3:15 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Janaan Garcia
Recording Secretary

Approved _____

Reverend Bich Nguyen
Presbyteral Council Secretary

Date Jan 17, 2020