

AOD Community Board
Meeting Minutes, March 20, 2021

Meeting Called to order 8:02 am with prayer led by Deacon Marc Rybinski

Attendees: Jim Berch, Carol Berch, Dave Fleming, Kelly Fleming, Alan Gwozdz, Dennis Loffreda, Brigid Loffreda, Russ Ortisi, Trish Ortisi, Rick Rhein, Anne Rhein, Marc Rybinski, Skip Rodger

Dennis welcomed Deacon Chris Beltowski our new Assistant Director, giving a brief explanation of our role in past, expressing hope that we would be of help to Deacon Chris going forward.

Chris brought us up to speed on his first two weeks.

- Met with Deacons Mike Houghton and Dave Casnovsky and the teams they work on support and lead.
- Met with Bishop Battersby
- Several meetings with Fr. Spezia
- Met with Deacon Marc Gemellaro, lot going on with the Ordination team.
- Have meeting with the seminary coming up
- Met with Deacon Russ regarding the upcoming convocation
- Top of the list is the assignments, Deacons have not yet been contacted, in past that communication would have come out in January or February. There are some pending decisions that will have to be made, but has there hasn't been a lot of communication to the diaconate yet, Chris is going to explore how that meeting can go or perhaps be postponed.

Jim had a question about the convocation, latest clergy news did not list the Deacon Convocation, just the one for the priests. Did the one for the Deacons get cancelled?

No, we are full steam ahead and unless there is some kind of ruling we are unaware of because of the pandemic, but everything is heading in the right direction. Russ can speak to that.

Deacon Russ: Convocation meeting are taking place, dates are October 21 - 24th. Responsibilities have been divvied up the same people or couples who had planned those duties in 2019, one addition is a memorial for Kevin Breen, planned by Frances and Lucy King. We would like to invite Shelia as well and honor her as well. Fr. John Riccardo will be speaking at our convocation, he's a dynamic speaker and sets you on fire. There are a few open items, Deacon Chris is going to look into budget dollars we have. We may need to increase the cost per couple modestly and some the things will be scaled back. We probably won't have the social gatherings or get togethers we normally have had in the past. Registration deadline, the count to Boyne is September 21.

Jim also asked about the Jubilee Dinner, any chance of that happening this year? Yeah, there are no events planned through the spring, but there are upcoming events planned for the Diocese, June 17 to 21, Deacon convocation October 21 to 24, Deacon clergy mass November 8th.

As things are moving forward to meeting in person, for example Formation is now in-person, Deacon Chris sees no reason why we shouldn't move forward with our New Deacon Breakfast, providing we can find a parish that can provide space for social distancing. At Formation Saturdays, all food was prepared and served individually. Russ said that St. Kiernan has that capability.

Dennis also said that St. Hubert's would be available as well. Since we were not able to do the breakfast last year we would like to include three years for this breakfast. Additional discussion will continue later.

Trish has been approached about doing something for the women's group, so she will start working on doing something over the summer, prior to the convocation. Russ mentioned that St. Kiernan has facilities to be able to have gathering of 50 – 60, also has ability to broadcast as well. Carol and Kelly both offered to help Trish brainstorm.

There were 17 applications, the group had not gone through all yet to know who has been accepted yet. It is a slow process. Question raised was would those interviewing find out who may have been accepted? We have not had that kind of feedback in the past. Chris will look into whether or not that could be relayed, based on confidentiality. Jim said he understood not, knowing about all of the applicants, but at least the one they had interviewed.

Discussion regarding nominations, how we want to enlarge the group by three couples, there are members who have been on board for much longer than expected, as Kevin had asked us to maintain status quo through the pandemic. Chris is looking for the stability of the group and would like to wait until summertime or late summertime. Brigid will send to Chris the timeline lines of members as well as the nomination forms Erin had sent out on Kevin's behalf in the past.

Also discussion about continuous education for Deacons, there are about five courses available online through the seminary, 20 to 30 minutes long, easy to absorb.

Discussion about the quarterly all Deacon meeting is meant to be a more general meeting, however, as family of parishes is so prevalent right now, the goal is to have information and updates and an ongoing way of communicating. Chris wants to dig deeper to see what role he might play in it and where we want to take it as a community.

Holy Thursday Chrism Mass, there are 30 deacons who have signed up through survey monkey, obviously expected, because of social distancing, any additional Deacons would be representing their parish and registered separately for that.

October 2, three men are expected to be ordained, it's too early to tell what restrictions will be in place, hopefully, we may be able to get back to normal.

As a wrap up, Dennis will get with Chris regarding the new Deacon breakfast. If Russ can check to see if St. Kiernan is available.

Rick gave a closing prayer and meeting ended at 9:40am

Next meeting via Ring on May 15, 2021