

AOD Community Board  
Meeting Minutes, November, 16, 2020

Meeting Called to order 8:10 am with prayer led by Deacon Dennis Loffreda

Attendees: Jim Berch, Carol Berch, Kevin Breen, Dave Fleming, Kelly Fleming, Bob Gadja, Dennis Loffreda, Brigid Loffreda, Steve Morello, Skip Rodger

Kevin's report:

- Offices at Chancery are still closed, not sure how long this will continue, still takes time for paperwork to be processed.
- Jubilee, Kevin sent out pins and certificates to the Jubilarians, needs to replace a few pins that arrived damaged.
- Couples retreat is still planned for February, remains to be seen if it is still able to go on. Carol and Jim explained they had both been on retreats recently, health checks and procedures were in place and they both felt safe, although Jim noted that the priests concelebrated Mass unmasked and lined up at the altar.
- Applications coming in, 15 – 16 in various stages completion of application as well as 3 reapplications.
- Mike Stewart is heading up a Vocations Committee, sending out pamphlets and video, especially in Detroit. There are two African Americans in formations, as well as two more that have applied.

Dennis asked how everyone is dealing with COVID in their parishes, busier, less busy?

- Dave said that he is doing 2 ½ times the work at his secular job as well as being busier at his parish, St. Renee Goupil in Sterling Heights. He has men's group, individual baptisms, not so much funerals. Parish has 1000 families; however, Mass attendance is anywhere from 30 to 120 peoples. Dave also stated that he doesn't feel safe as his pastor follows sanitation guidelines, doesn't enforce masking and social distancing.
- Bob stated that most of the time there is enough room for social distancing, but for confirmations there wasn't enough room for social distancing. St. Perpetua, Waterford.
- Communion distribution is being done by priest and deacon two sections apart so that people returning to their seats do not pass one another. Dismissals are a done row by row to control contact as people are leaving.
- Jim stated that during summer, they held Masses outside (St. Isaac Jogues, St. Clair Shores)

Deacon Steve Morello gave an update on the work Family of Parishes Committee

- Steve discussed the book that the committee is studying as well as the five proposals put to the Bishops.
- The Diaconate a Full and Equal Order by James Barnett, an Episcopalian Rector, is out of print, but available in used books. Book follows diaconate from beginning to modern times and is full of footnotes as this was James' dissertation, so the footnotes are full of information and very on track with Unleash the Gospel.

- Formation team within Family of Parishes will be presenting programs in late summer or fall in person, in meantime there will be one hour presentations to give all the context. Deacons are called and gifted, so all will talk and discern about what our gifts are and be sent out on Mission.
- Five proposals:
  1. Informed Mission. Deacon Sent on Mission. Deacons are called and formed for mission regarding the mission in parish, will the Episcopal Council delegate the ongoing formation to the Deacon Council?
  2. Deacons are in service to the Bishop. Basically, the last real contact with the Bishop is at ordination, originally there was the Bishop and the Deacon, we need to return to that connection. Question is who should be the bishop delegate to team to better and the relationship and can see it through?
  3. The Mission. Deacons should live off this two pronged ministry that is evangelization and charity in the family of parishes by ably serving every parish within and outside the parish of families in the highways and bi-ways. The question is, shall the deacons be mission to every parish with the family and the highways and byways by the Archbishop as they may be able?
  4. Accountability, everyone who was sent on mission needs to be accountable to somebody. When we're sent on mission in the family, we will be accountable to the Moderator, when we're sent on mission outside of the family, we will be accountable to the agency head.
  5. Always a team. Just as Jesus sent out his disciples two by two, we'll work together whether is with or clergy in the family or if we do ministry outside we won't do that by ourselves, with do it with other deacons or laypeople who we call to assist us in whatever that other mission might be. The question is basically shall this proposition be adopted.
    - Question for Steve:
    - You had mentioned that priests will be receiving new assignment letters, will Deacons be receiving the same type of letter? Steve said no, the committee has recommended there be no change in assignment for a year. He is anticipating that deacons be invited into all of the parishes within the family. I am also anticipating that whoever the moderator is, the deacon will only be accountable to that moderator, so there is no conflict.
    - Will parishes be up and functioning in this manner on day one? As Steve sees it, there will be an official announcement on December 8<sup>th</sup> of families. From day one you will see the beginning of cooperation.

From Kevin – starting in December – January, asking Deacons to discern and pray about what where they will best serve. This will not be a simple yes or no, but where are our gifts and talents are and where we will be serve. Should be completed and returned well before Assignment board meets in March.

As there was some concerned mentioned that meeting was more than an hour, Steve wrapped up quickly, but has so much more to share and would like to see more deacons involved in the meetings to help spread an understanding with our deacon brothers. Dennis said he would give Steve a call for further discussion.

Jim mentioned that the two week old reminder of today's sparsely attended meeting, might have better attended with a reminder this past week.

Steve asked that anyone with questions or comments, please give him a call.

Deacon Kevin gave closing blessing.

Dave motioned to adjourn, Jim seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 9:22am.

Next meeting will be Saturday January 16, 2021 at 8am, Kevin will send Ring link.