

PRESBYTERAL COUNCIL
Diocese of San Diego
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
Thursday, September 17, 2020

1.0 CALL TO ORDER AND OPENING PRAYER

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. with opening prayer by Fr. Bautista

2.0 ROLL CALL

Present: Bishop McElroy, Bishop Dolan, Bishop Bejarano and Fathers: Bautista, Bosque, Brockhaus, Escalante, Escurel, Herrera, Manahan, Masillamony, Minimo, Murphy, Pham, Ramirez, Ravenkamp, Spahr, Zárate-Suárez

Excused: Horning, Nuñez, Ratajczak

3.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Agenda approved

4.0 APPROVAL OF MINUTES of April 29, 2020 meeting

5.0 BISHOP MCELROY

5.1 COVID19 CHALLENGES

Each priest given opportunity to share ministerial and personal challenges during Pandemic. A time of adaptations for the celebration of the Eucharist and sacraments in order to implement protocols in changing situations. Live-streamed Masses to keep parishioners connected. Tough financial decisions to make with diminished income in parishes. The stress of layoffs and cutting hours for employees. Efforts by priests, staff, and ministry leaders to reach out to parishioners. Pastors dealing with “decision fatigue”, confronting problems, finding creative solutions, dealing with their own physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. The supply work of many retired priests has reduced along with greater isolation. Priests need to be pro-active in reaching out to one another. Dealing with frustration in planning ahead and missing in person meetings. Trying to answer the question: “Where are the people?” and “How do we bring them back?” Bishop offered two images for time we are experiencing: Purgatory: a time of deprivation that eventually is going to end; Pilgrimage: God leading us to a new reality.

5.2 Reviving the Life of the Church: From survival mode to pastoral vitality when pandemic ends, the need will be to reclaim the damage to people’s relationship with the Church. The Diocesan Pastoral Council will be given the task of recommending ways to reach out to people to bring them back to the practice of their faith.

- 5.3 Guidelines for re-opening aspects of parish life beyond liturgy and sacraments: catechetical ministry, parish organizations, social gatherings. Rod Valdivia, Marioly Galvan, and John Galvan presented current diocesan guidelines. Discussion followed ending in vote regarding use of parish space for non-liturgical gatherings. Priority given to catechetical and formational programs and prayer groups. Time limit of 90 minutes for these gatherings. Continue prohibition of social gatherings in parish space. School classrooms cannot be shared by other groups to avoid cross-contamination. All permitted gatherings must continue to observe masking and social distancing protocols.
- 5.4 Political Activities in Churches: No materials may be distributed advocating for or against a particular candidate or political party. Materials from USCCB and from California Catholic Conference may be used.
- 5.5 Pastoral Leadership regarding social justice: Bishop Ramon Bejarano has been appointed Vicar for Justice, Life, and Peace.
- 5.6 Options for in person gatherings of priests: With the cancellation of Convocation, priests are encouraged take the initiative to reach out to one another informally for meals and conversation. Smaller gatherings by deanery may substitute for larger diocesan gatherings for the time being.

6.0 **FINANCE:**

Shirley Pajanor reported on the ever-evolving situation of government procedures following up on the Payroll Protection Program (e.g. from 8 weeks to 24 weeks to spend loan). Although not finalized, it seems that loans under \$150,000 will receive automatic forgiveness. She is in regular contact with the banks, working with parish/school bookkeepers, and waiting for additional guidance from the Small Business Administration. The diocese monitors the data from parish collections.

7.0 **PRIESTLY VOCATIONS:**

Fr. Lauro Minimo reported that he has not been able to visit parishes due to pandemic. However, six discerners are participating in gatherings at St. Francis Center. A new Vocation poster for 2020-2021 is available for the parishes. An Explorer Day is scheduled for November 14.

8.0 **ADJOURNMENT - 12:01 p.m.**

Next Meeting Tuesday, November 3, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.