

**PRESBYTERAL COUNCIL**  
**Diocese of San Diego**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, May 23, 2018 – 10:00 a.m. - Noon**  
**Diocesan Pastoral Center - Bishop's Conference Room**

1.0 CALL TO ORDER & OPENING PRAYER

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. and opened with the Diocesan Prayer.

2.0 ROLL CALL

Present: Bishop McElroy, Bishop Dolan, and Fathers: Brockhaus, Campbell, Cochran, Decasa, Ediza, Escalante, Jauregui, Lara, Mulcahy, Murphy, O'Donnell, Pham, Ratajczak, Saroki, Spahr, Zarate-Suarez

Excused: Ravenkamp

Absent:

3.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Agenda approved

4.0 APPROVAL OF MINUTES of March 1, 2018 Meeting

No corrections

5.0 DEANERY REPORTS

**Cathedral Deanery:** A presentation from Noreen McInnes from the Diocesan Liturgy Office, regarding implementation of the new Misal Romano, upcoming music workshop, and revamping the format for liturgical trainings. A presentation from Laura Martin-Spencer and the team of the Diocesan Office of Family Life and Spirituality regarding implementation of Synod goals at the parish level. An update was given on the status of the possibility of Cristo Rey High School coming to San Diego and its impact on the Cathedral Deanery. Our next gathering (social/bbq) is scheduled for Wednesday June 20, 2018, hosted by the Jesuit Community at the Grape Street House. Lunch concluded the meeting.

**Escondido Deanery:** No report

**El Cajon Deanery:** Noreen McInnes from the Diocesan Liturgy Office presented the new Misal Romano. She informed us of the inclusion of the new obligatory memorial to be celebrated on the Monday after Pentecost. Laura Martin-Spencer and team from Office for Family Life and Spirituality presented guidelines and discussed the office's efforts, so far, to help implement them.

Fr. David Leon explained that he was having a difficult time making sure Alvarado Hospital was covered during his absences.

The Presbyteral Council report resulted in a discussion about the Catholic Education tax being levied on schools as a head tax and on parishes as a percentage of income tax. At

least four of our pastors have schools. The following points are made: The solution doesn't address the underlying issue. The assumed underlying issue is poor enrollment. The solution should address that issue. What are we who are paying the tax getting from it? Does buoying-up poorly performing schools help the Diocese in general? There has been no discussion on what the money will be used for, or what the purpose of the tax is, deeper than who might be getting it. There doesn't seem to be an overall vision for Catholic Education in the Diocese. What is the goal of having Catholic Schools? What is our vision for the future? If we are not trying to provide Catholic Education for all of our families, what are we trying to do? The pastors were not so much against a Catholic Education tax but were frustrated that we don't know what the real goals and what the use of the money will be.

Since El Cajon representative brought this item up for discussion. Bishop McElroy proceeded to explain. Bishop suggested to invite John Galvan, School Superintendent to talk to the deaneries to discuss what the mission of Catholic schools in the diocese is. Bishop gave two reasons for Catholic Education.

- 1) The data indicates that Catholic school graduates are more likely to be more involved in being leaders in the life of the Church. There have been many changes; diminishing number of schools, breadth of outreach in terms of Catholic population. But in this robust finding that concludes why we care about Catholic schools is that they will provide leaders for the Church community. Because it is still a primary indicator of who emerges as leaders in the life of the Church.
- 2) It's a way to provide education opportunities for the poor. The scholarship money tends to go towards the poor to receive opportunities that they might not get and be among our leadership in the future. The challenge here is enrollment. Many of the parents in poor areas cannot afford to enroll their children. Also, the Mexican heritage working class people didn't tend to go to Catholic schools to further education. That tradition is a cultural one that carries over and provides additional challenges in the Diocese like ours where our majority of population is Spanish speaking.

Our scholarship is 100 percent oriented toward the elementary schools. With the new tax, many will find ways and decide at the local level how to spend it, either to subsidizing their own kids to go to Catholic schools or neighboring schools. The rest would go into the general scholarship fund that is used every year to assist kids where it is needed most. The fund tends to go to grammar schools, the poor working class.

**Mission Deanery:** Noreen McInnes from the Diocesan Liturgy Office asked for feedback and ideas about the Liturgical Training Workshops. The Office is trying to offer workshops at least once a quarter, with a changing venue: Pastoral Center, North County, South County. Workshops need to be offered for Ministers of Music, especially for those who have embraced a "Praise and Worship" style of music for Sunday Liturgy. There will be a FDLC presentation on "Welcoming the Misal Romano, tercera edition" on Wednesday, June 20<sup>th</sup> at Corpus Christi in Bonita. The obligatory memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church is to be celebrated annually on the Monday after Pentecost (this year, May 21).

Rev. John Hurley spoke on the implementation of the proposals of the General Assembly of the San Diego Diocesan Synod 2016. Fr. Hurley is presently visiting the parishes of the diocese to assess which ones have formed committees. The following are the committees already being formed in diocesan parishes: Ministry to Engaged Couples; Ministry to Newly Married Couples; Ministry to Married Couples; Ministry to Military Couples; Ministry to the Widowed; Ministry to LGBTQ persons and family members; Ministry to Blended Families; Ministry to Single Parents; Ministry to the Separated and

Divorced; Ministry to Family Care Givers; Ministry to Ecumenical and Interreligious Couples; Ministry to Families with Children with Mental illness; Ministry to Civilly Married Couples. These ministries do not necessarily maximize the opportunities of particular family situations a parish may have.

Matt Spahr asked to save a date regarding “Our Families, our Future: Creating Parish Cultures of Welcome.” It is scheduled for Friday, October 19<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 to 6:30 p.m. at the Immaculata, USD. It is hoped that each parish will send 5-6 representatives to hear the presentations. This afternoon will take the place of the Fall Assembly. Matt also gave a report on the Deanery Survey on Financial Assistance to Schools. To date, six parishes are participating. A half percent of the tax is being used for the support of the schools.

**Oceanside Deanery:** The March 2018 meeting of the Oceanside Deanery was held at St. John the Evangelist Parish, Encinitas. The meeting was held Friday, March 9th. Presentations were given by John Sperrazzo on behalf of Birth Choice, and Laura Martin Spencer, Ricardo Marquez, John Prust, and Joseph Dowling gave us an update on the Office for Family Life and Spirituality, with major discussion on the “new paradigm” for marriage preparation in our Diocese. In May, we will have our annual dinner at the home of Albert and Angela Colucci. The date is yet to be determined.

The May 2018 meeting of the Oceanside Deanery was held at the Albert & Angela Colucci home where we gathered for our annual deanery dinner. The meeting was held Friday, March 18th. A short meeting was held before dinner, and Fr. Cavanaugh Wallace of St. Margaret’s Parish, spoke about vocations. Fr. Cavanaugh is the Vocations Representative for the Diocese. He reminded us that the priests are called to be “leaven in the dough” for vocations from our parishes. He recommended that the priests inform their parishioners about the “state of vocations” in our diocese. A special prayer was prayed for Fr. Larry Dolan who was a great friend and active participant in our deanery.

**South Bay Deanery:** No Report

**El Centro Deanery:** Spanish Misal for USA was presented. Bishop McElroy has approved the use of screens to foster the congregations’ participation in singing. Properties are to be transferred into these holding corporations. Three quarters of one percent (0.75%) of taxable annual income will be assessed to diocesan parishes without a school. Bishop John Dolan, Pedro Rivera and Lauro Minimo are available for summer supply. Clergy ordinations and assignments were discussed. There was a discussion about a hospital and prison chaplain for the northern section of the Imperial Valley.

## 6.0 REPORTS

### 6.1. Cultural Diversity

We had a multicultural celebration during Pentecost weekend. Bishop McElroy attended with 28 priests, over 1400 people attending the Mass. It was a wonderful spirit procession with people in costume and culture. There was a sense of unity among cultural diversity, presence of spirit, and people were feeling good with the life of the church. We would hope to continue this celebration annually. There was television coverage on the celebration. There were seventeen ethnic communities represented; the largest groups that participated were Filipinos followed by Hispanics.

## 6.2. Office for Priests/Clergy Concerns

At the Fall Assembly, pastors are asked to invite 5 parish leaders to the workshop to hear keynote speakers with a separate track for priests, and then come together for shared liturgy.

The Priests Convocation will continue to be held at the Temecula Creek even though it has new management. It is now owned by Pechanga Casino. The cost of food is going up. For next year, we will need to raise the cost for priests to cover those expenses.

## 6.3. Pastoral Planning

No Report

## 6.4. RECOPS

Attended RECOPS in Reno, Nevada in April. There is a renewed energy and enthusiasm toward RECOPS, it can be attributable to the representatives from the Bishops Conference attending. Joe Brennan was present for the entire meeting. The underlying theme was talking about best practices and challenges from different dioceses. One of the projects that will be worked on from now until the next meeting is funeral policies in different places. We received compliments for the brochure that we've have in our diocese and now others are adopting it or something similar.

Some discussion about marijuana: concerns its use among employees, school parents, and whether there should be a policy in place.

Funeral homes are training staff to become celebrants for funeral services: where they now becoming one stop shops, where they don't refer to themselves as churches or their faiths. It has become common and quite problematic for some dioceses. It has been found problematic here. Additional research in this area is needed.

## 6.5. AD HOC Committee for Retired Priests

Committee met three times to discuss income and cost of living in San Diego. Bishop McElroy presence and input as well from other priests is greatly appreciated. One recommendation because of high housing cost, is if Bishop can make a \$1,000 monthly allowance to the retired priests.

There are two options: \$500 per month addition for retired priests or \$1,000 per month addition for retired priests if \$3,000 is relinquished from the diocesan active priests. The new policy should be polled, but thoroughly explained first.

Bishop McElroy recommends that Mercer, the diocesan financial consultant, talk about the Rabbi Trust because of tax implication. January 1<sup>st</sup> is a logical date to make a change for the retired priests if the priests vote in September, it won't be difficult to set up. It was agreed that we bring it up to the priests and discuss the two options.

## 6.6. AD HOC Committee for Sabbatical Priests

No Report

## 7.0 BISHOPS ITEMS

### 7.1. Pastor with school building

At the current time, the diocesan policy does not allow the renting of school buildings for income purposes for other schools. We're facing that some are already doing it (i.e., St. John of Evangelist rents school to Aseltine School ~150k/annually). Other schools face

dilemmas with the building maintenance. The pastors have asked, can they rent the schools since they are in a dilemma and some have already done so? The thought is to have a 50 percent of net revenue go to Catholic School scholarship funds. It can be toward charter or private school. Recommend that there is a standard contract that highlights the rental period, what the diocese requires, timeshare permission, maintenance requirement, etc. Recommend forming a committee to see what other dioceses are doing. Determine what will be written in the contract, and essentially how to proceed.

## 8.0 OLD BUSINESS

### 8.1 Immigration

What came up in the discussion, was the question whether to increase the use of separating mothers and children to deter people from coming to the border. This is a very serious problem and is enunciated as a national policy. Pat Murphy, from Casa de los Hombres and helps out at Holy Trinity, said that they are already doing this, separating mothers and children. As a result, it is important that the diocese do something to assist in this.

Bishop McElroy has asked Catholic Charities to look at using Casa San Juan that became the Casa Josephine (the old convent at St. John's Evangelist), as a center for refuge in case mothers with children are faced with this situation. When they are coming here for asylum, they have an initial hearing, to determine if they have a well-founded fear of persecution or violence in their own country. Traditionally, if the hearing officer allows the family to be admitted with parole, it allows them to seek medical care in the US. The problem is that the government is increasingly not doing it anymore. Therefore, we are opening a program for the Asylum seekers and women who have been trafficked. They are not coming in illegally, but whether or not they can stay is another issue. Bishop McElroy is requesting the religious Sisters to help in this project.

Bishop McElroy presented a pamphlet/booklet (Spanish and English) to help families prepare for the information and for parish staff to follow up. We should have it in the hands of our parishes. It has been going around the immigrant dominant parishes to have large meetings with them.

## 9.0 NEW BUSINESS

"I Give Catholic" is a program that is found especially in the South of Atlanta. On Tuesday following Thanksgiving, there is a 24-Hour window for people to give to "I Give Catholic" like a go-fund-me page. The concept is that there is a startup fee \$5000 for the diocese. After that, the parishes or entities, schools, or Catholic Charities may piggy back on this start up. You can post this to your parish bulletin/website with the link to "I Give Catholic" then it is where you can push your own fundraising efforts (e.g., your school, neighboring school, or various efforts). There is a transaction fee of 3.9%. The Diocese of Atlanta was able to use the 24-hour window to raise \$300,000 and out the door cost to them was only \$12,000. It's really no cost to the parish per se, other than the up-start fee. It does not conflict with the Annual Catholic Appeal, tends to be within the time of giving. Statistics show that it's the time frame people are willing to give; 75% showed people are giving the same to the other appeals, 5% found people give more to the appeals, 15% don't know, and only 5% gave less. If you go online to "I Give Catholic" anyone can contribute to the page. It doesn't only have to be funded from the parishioners.

Can we come up with our own “I Give Tuesday” rather than pay the 3.9% transaction fee? What is the added value of taking this route? It’s a nationally known program and has proven to work in Diocese of Atlanta. It could be a benefit where the contributor can decide where their money can go; whether they choose the church, the school, or other Catholic charities under this umbrella.

This year cost of living will be increased to 3%.

Finance department feels that Parish Finance Council policy should be looked at again.

## 10.0 ADJOURNMENT

Meeting ended at 11:42 a.m.

Next meeting September 12, 2018 @ 10:00 a.m.