

Conference of Deacons Meeting Minutes

11/06/2010

Holy Angels– South Meriden

In attendance: Deacons: Neil Richter, Donna Yatcko, Steve Yatcko, Tim Healy, Ken DosSantos, Joe Guzauckas, Gene Nebiolo, Bob Pallotti

Meeting was called to order at 9:02 AM by Tim and the group shared an opening reflection based on the next day's gospel.

Minutes: The minutes of the 9/25/2010 meeting were read and accepted.

Treasurer's Report: The report submitted by Gene was presented and accepted.

Old Business

- Meeting of Regional Coordinators
It was decided to table this item and remove it from the agenda of future meetings
- Trends
This item will remain on the agenda, but moved to the General Discussion topic.
- Implementation of Appreciative Inquiry model
This item has been conflated with the Diaconal Strategy item under New Business
 - Determine what deacons need and do
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 - Expand the vision of the diaconate; from the deanery level, ideas about future directions need to be collected and given to Bob, for presentation to the archbishop and other deliberative parties. This is an important new role for deaneries.
 - Community issues deacons only get together as a group at retreats and at workshops; Joe pointed out that there is a peril here of the "Lone Ranger" effect when community is held in low regard
 - Community and communication are essential for proper implementation of the concept of subsidiarity:
(http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/what_you_need_to_know/index.cfm?id=84)
 - Bob built on Joe's observation, suggesting that in some cases, deacons are becoming parish-based liturgical deacons and even quasi-pastors because of the priest shortage.

New Business

I. Deacon Wives Ministry Report

- A. Donna mentioned that a Day of Prayer for candidates' wives had been held at the Caritas Center; she reported that she met prayerful, interested women
- B. The Wives' retreat will be held at Holy Family Monastery on March 19-22, 2011
- C. Main concerns seem to be:
 - 1. Understanding how to achieve family and ministry balance, especially in families with young children
 - 2. Understanding what expectations of wives are and being reassured about not having to attend all the candidates' classes
 - 3. Understanding what the milestones are in the path to ordination
 - 4. Discomfort about the ten-year reassignment process; Bob mentioned that the Deacons Personnel Board, the Vicar for Priests and the Archbishop (who has the final say) all look at reassignments from many perspectives
 - 5. Bob mentioned that he doesn't want there to be a perception that the office doesn't care about wives thoughts, concerns and feelings, or that there's a specific model for deacons' wives that has to be followed. With Fr. Donahue's approval, he will be holding another Open House in the Spring

II. Deanery Reports

- A. Litchfield – active; usually meets the first Saturday of the month, but the November meeting will be on Saturday, the 20th. There will be no December meeting – the next will be in January. Ken reports that the men like to get together to pray and hash over problems
- B. Bristol - Neil reports that the deanery is active again. Their second meeting was held on October 21. Six deacons attended. They shared Evening Prayer and set ground rules for book discussion. Everyone was positive about renewing the deanery.
- C. Suburban Hartford and New Britain
Joe reported that he was working on getting these two deaneries together to do some things collaboratively.

III. Project Reports

- A. Vocations
Steve reported that a formation meeting had been held on November 2. The next meeting, to do brainstorming, is scheduled for November 20. Five men have been approached to see if they would help. Three have responded positively so far. Steve said that they were aware that this was not a one-shot deal, and that a significant outcome would be an on-going process that could be used for vocations.
- B. Collaboration
Tim reported that he would be heading up this project. He has contacted Fr. Ron May to begin getting help, and Fr. Ron has agreed to do so (this happened after the COD meeting). They will be meeting on November 11 to strategize.

- C. Retired Deacons
Bob had given Tim a list of potential candidates to organize and run this project, but Tim hasn't gotten around to doing anything with it just yet.
- D. Deacon Spirituality
Neil reported that project formation and assembly of a team is slated to occur in December. The current thought is to provide workshops, models for development and increase of diaconal spirituality, and a variety of web resources. Bob asked that this project dovetail with the work of the Continuing Education committee.

IV. Director's Report

- A. See attached
- B. Bob mentioned that there have been requests for deacons to do campus ministry. This would free up priests for parish assignments. The group suggested that job descriptions accompany requests for assistance like this, so that deacons can know with more precision for what it is that they're signing up.
- C. Pending Fr. Donahue's approval, the next inquiry sessions for people interested in the diaconate will be held the third or fourth Sundays in March, 2011, at Sacred Heart Parish in Bloomfield. Classes for aspirants would begin the following September.
- D. A new chairman for the Continuing Education Committee is needed. Three nominations are required. Please send your suggestions (including yourself) to Bob. The archbishop makes the final selection.
- E. The 2011 deacons' retreat will be led by Fr. Savage, an African-American priest we're assured will keep our attention in unique and memorable ways. In 2012, a Hispanic priest highly recommended by our Hispanic deacons will run the retreat.
- F. Bob reminded us that:
 - 1. The NADD Region I conference will be in Hyannis, November 13, 2011
 - 2. There will be a spirituality day on December 11, 2011 at Holy Family Retreat Center, at which the topic will be *Mary Through the Ages*
 - 3. Fr. Paul Check will present *Ministry to Gays and Lesbians and Their Families* on April 9, 2011 at St. Thomas Seminary, from 8:30-2:00. Lunch will be provided.

Please register for these events at the website (<http://www.deacon-hartford.org>) or by calling the office at (860) 761-7445

The next meeting is January 8, 2011 @ 9 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted: Dcn. Tim Healy – President, for Joe Ryzewski – Secretary

**Report from the Director of the Office of the Diaconate
for the Archdiocese of Hartford
Nov. 6, 2010**

I. Recent developments

- A. The Deacons will establish a “Courage” chapter for ministering to Gays and Lesbians and their families in the Archdiocese of Hartford. We held our first meeting Oct. 21. We hope to have things in place for the April 9 workshop with Fr. Paul Check.
- B. Demographic Study on the Diaconate in Hartford. Planning for the Future. We had our first meeting. Presently we are analyzing the Annual Reports to culled data concerning the depth and breadth of diaconal ministry in the Archdiocese of Hartford.

II. Continuing Education

- A. Held at St. James Church in Rocky Hill: The Death Penalty with Mrs. Vicki Schrieber. Oct. 4.
- B. Two year program on Issues of Human Sexuality and Beginning Life Issues will continue with the April 9, 2011 workshop with Fr. Paul Check on ministering to Gays and Lesbians and their families.
- C. The Annual Deacon Retreat - Oct. 15-17 at Holy Family Monastery: Msgr. Murphy. *Spirituality of Fasting*. Many of deacons liked the Retreat message. We had 83 deacons in attendance. Only on the 9 newly ordained came to the retreat. This was addressed. For next year’s retreat I propose that the Sunday Mass be dedicated to remembering those deacons and family members who gone home to the Lord. The Archbishop will be there Saturday next year. This would make up for losing this Mass at the Convocation.
- D. Hyannis Region one Conference, Nov. 13
- E. Spirituality Day Dec. 11 at Holy Family Retreat Center, *Mary Through the Ages*.

III. Vocations

- A. Archbishop is open to having 15-20 men accepted into Aspirancy if they are qualified.
- B. Accepted 12 men accept for Year One as Candidates.
- C. Class of 2012: 15 men
- D. Nine men ordained this June
- E. We begin inquiry sessions in March 2011 for Sept. Aspirants

IV. Newsletter

- A. New series on Contemporary Theologians and Spiritual Writers and Deacon Ministry, People of Christian Witness and a series on Religion and Science.
- B. Please submit book reviews and other material for inclusion in the newsletter – space is unlimited.

Respectfully submitted,
Deacon Bob Pallotti, Director