

## Council of Conference of Deacons Meeting Minutes

3/12/2011

**In attendance:** Deacons: Tim Healy, Ed Taddei, Joe Ryzewski, Neil Richter, Bob Pallotti, Nick Genovese, Gene Nebiolo, Eric Thermer, Ken DosSantos

Meeting was called to order at 9:05 AM by Tim and the group shared an opening reflection read by Neil based on Sunday's gospel.

**Minutes:** The minutes of the 1/17/11 meeting were read and accepted.

**Treasurer's Report:** Presented and accepted.

**Deacon Wives Report:** – None (Steve and Donna had sent Tim an e-mail excusing themselves)

### Old Business

- Meeting of Regional Coordinators  
Dcn Pallotti requested this be placed on our next meeting's agenda so a more coordinated plan can be formulated for 2012.
- Trends  
On May 14<sup>th</sup> there will be 6 men ordained for the priesthood. Bob would like to see good representation from deacons at the ordination ceremony.
- The Appreciative Inquiry Model will be discussed at the May meeting along with the Regional Coordinator topic. This will include a questionnaire. Eric and Neil offered to help Bob. They will develop an overall plan before then, to be presented to the CCOD at the May meeting. After that, Bob will present it (as modified by the CCOD, if necessary) to the archbishop, who will decide if we can move ahead with it.

### Project Reports

#### o Vocations

Joe noted that pairs of deacons from our committee have spoken to men on retreat at Holy Family Retreat Center in January and February. They gave a brief testimony about the call to the Diaconate and an invitation to the inquiry meeting in March. The committee's chair, Steve Yatcko, plans a follow-up meeting to focus on our next steps.

Tim noted that Maria Zone, Archdiocese's Communication Officer, is a great resource for publishing articles, hosting interviews about what deacons are doing. Bob also noted that WJMJ is willing to do spots about the Diaconate. A suggestion was made about creating a u-tube site and assembling a brochure/handout about the Diaconate.

It was suggested that the Archdiocese's Vocations website be upgraded to link to existing sites to obtain information about the priesthood, diaconate, and religious life. A question was raised whether to include lay ministry too? ( Consensus said 'no').

- Collaboration – No news
- Retired Deacons
 

Tim reviewed a survey with the CCOD that's to be sent out to retired deacons to better understand their needs and interests to get together, receive information about upcoming events, etc. Widows are excluded, because Donna and others will be checking out widows' needs. A follow-up call will be made within a week of the return-by date to ensure they have received and returned it. Based upon their response, a plan will be established. (e.g. Engage a newly ordained deacon to be paired with a couple of senior deacons)
- Diaconal Spirituality
 

Nick distributed several articles pointing to spiritual resources available and the central focus that discipleship must play in our lives and attracting others to the Diaconate. We are encouraged to utilize these and other resources for praying. Tim suggested we share with others how we are all nourishing our own spirituality. Bob noted that we are continually developing ourselves and also called to teach others. He suggested this be a focus of another meeting

### **New Business**

- Diaconal Leadership Study
 

Dcn. Dr. Eric Thermer introduced a proposal for an internal assessment of the leadership climate within the diaconate. Deacons are called to serve, and in that service to lead others through change, crisis and most important to Christ. That leadership role occurs within the structure of an organization that has many perceptions of how diaconal leadership manifests in our ministry.

The assessment is done through an anonymous survey following strict research protocol to protect the integrity of the assessment and participants. The idea came from conversations about diaconal leadership and development at the recent education committee meeting. The model is based upon his professional experience in organizational development.

He discussed some of the content of a survey that would be sent to active deacons to determine "the leadership temperature" within the diaconate. The confidential feedback from deacons will provide insights into areas for future training for deacons to better assume the leadership roles in their ministries while maintaining their call to service and followership. It will compliment the spiritual development of our deacons in helping them be even more effective in their ministries.

A more detailed plan will be presented to the CCOD at the next meeting to discuss the study and pilot the survey before making any recommendation to the Archbishop.

There are four major areas of the study that include: leading self, leading others, leading performance and change, and leading the organization. Some of the competencies within these area include accountability, followership, self awareness, personal conduct, health & well-being, technical proficiency, communication, respect

of others, team building, mentoring, taking care of others, problem solving, stewardship, fiscal & human resource management, political savvy, and partnering.

Tim noted that this survey fits nicely with several previously noted projects (viz., collaboration and appreciative inquiry). Bob noted he would also like questions added about the Diaconate program. It was suggested a pilot would be a good first step.

Tim and Bob will work with Eric to re-cast it with the Collaboration project and bring it to the May meeting for us to review. Bob will then present the proposal to the Archbishop.

## o **CCOD Strategy - Part 2**

### **Identity**

The Conference of Deacons is composed of all deacons in the Archdiocese of Hartford. Deacons are members simply by virtue of their ordination. You cannot *not* be a member. Participation, though, is completely optional.

### **Mission**

The mission of the CCOD is twofold:

1. To advise the Director of Deacons about what's going on in the lives of deacons and their families, and to advise deaneries about what's going on in the life of the larger church that affects them.
2. To propose projects to be undertaken to address issues and opportunities that affect the diaconate in general. With the approval of the director, projects are launched and managed to conclusion.

The CCOD doesn't share the director's authority and has no directive authority with regard to any particular deacon. Its role is simply to be an information conduit and a project management resource.

### **Values**

The CCOD is a purpose-driven, organization of compassionate men who place high value on personal integrity and service in the name of Jesus Christ. As heralds of His Good News, we envision ourselves as bearers of peace and justice. Committed to being deeply spiritual and prayerful people, we cherish our faith and share it with those we serve.

### **Goal (new)**

The Goals of the CCOD are to:

- Support the Archbishop in the serving the people of God
- Accomplish identified projects of the Conference
- Create the annual plans of the Continuing Education Committee
- Encourage each other's spiritual growth (complete spirituality project)
- Encourage growth of the Diaconate (complete vocations project)

**Deanery Reports - None**

**Director's Report ( Refer to separate attachment)**

### **Upcoming Events**

- April 9<sup>th</sup> – Workshop – Ministering to People with Same Sex Attractions @ St. Thomas Seminary
- July 31<sup>st</sup> – Convocation
- TBD - 3<sup>rd</sup> Roman Missal workshop with Fr. Baranowski
- June 4<sup>th</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> Roman Missal workshop with Msgr. Maroney
- October 13<sup>th</sup> -16<sup>th</sup> Deacon Retreat
- October 23<sup>rd</sup> – Connecticut Catholic Men’s Conference @ Palace Theater in Waterbury. On behalf of the leadership team planning this year’s conference, Dcn. Eric made a request for stronger support and a greater presence from the deacons. Deacons have great influence on leading the men of their parish and bringing them to this statewide Catholic event.

The leadership team is also requesting greater participation in the event from deacons by saving the date, bringing as many men and their sons to the event from their parishes, and participating in the event’s procession and Mass at the conclusion of the day-long conference. One of our own deacons, Paul Kulas, will be a featured presenter alongside several nationally known figures – Doug Barry from RADIX (seen of EWTN), Randy Raus, from Life Teen and Tom Peterson, from Catholics Come Home. More information will be forthcoming.

Closing Prayer was offered by Ed and meeting ended at 11:25 a.m.

The next meeting is, May 21, 2011 @ 9 a.m. at Holy Angels ( tentative rescheduling); pout-luck breakfast foods welcome – a regular meeting is planned

Respectfully Submitted: Dcn. Joe Ryzewski – Secretary

**Report from the Director of the Office of the Diaconate  
for the Archdiocese of Hartford  
March 12, 2011**

I. Recent developments

A. The Deacons will establish a “Courage” chapter for ministering to Gays and Lesbians [preferred term of address is “people with same-sex attraction”] 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. Submitted a draft of the relevant data to the Archbishop that you received this morning

II. Continuing Education

A. Committee met this past Feb. Here are the items discussed:

Meeting Minutes for CEC  
Feb. 16, 2011

- I. Opening Prayer- Evening Prayer
- II. Present; Deacons Bob Pallotti, Ron Biamonte, Eric Thermer, John Hoffman, Tim Healy and Neil Richter
- III. April 9- Workshop
  - A. Ministry to People with Same Sex Attractions: April 9, 2011 at St. Thomas Seminary, 9-12 noon. Preparing a Courage chapter for the Archdiocese.
  - B. Convocation July 31, 2011
  - C. Third Roman Missal workshop will be planned in consultation with Fr. Baranowski.
  - D. Msgr. Maroney will be presenting a workshop on the Third Roman Missal on June 4, 2011
  - E. Bishop Peter Rosazza Justice and Peace Conference on June 11.\*\*\*\*\***

IV. Possible Topics:

- A. Technology and the Parish- Mr. John Roberto
- B. Science and Religion- deacons to be conversant with the culture and as a way of responding to new discovery and the new atheists. Also, look at the implications for deacon spirituality and ethics. We might want to speak to Bill Walsh of Holy Family Retreat Center, or someone from Fordham or Fairfield University. Deacon Bob P. expressed a concern that whoever we ask to do this be sure to be clear on the Catholic Church’s teaching on Natural Theology so as not to generate unfounded concerns that somehow this is “New Age” stuff. Suggest that we talk to Bro. Bob Moriarty about this since he held a conference on Nov. 13, 2010 on the new cosmology and spirituality.
- C. Interreligious dialogue along the lines of “Knowing the Other” and collaboration on issues of justice and peace in consultation with the Archbishop.
- D. Dealing with Loss—Sr. Maureen O’ Brien
- E. Ministry to those suffering from Addictions. We would like the deacons to become familiar with what drives addictions, how to spot addictive behavior, how to minister to the person with the addiction and to his or her family.

- F. SCCs and the Parish- Deacons have not had a workshop with Bro. bob for at least 17 years.
- G. Evangelizing those who have left or are inactive in the parish. Deacon Thermer thought that this would be a good topic to pursue since we are clearly suffering a downturn in Sunday Mass attendance.
- H. Spirituality of the deacon—proposed that we have a yearly workshop or day of reflection on the spirituality of the deacon apart from the Annual Deacon Retreat.

3. 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.

4. The Annual Deacon Retreat - Oct. will be Fr. Warren Savage of Springfield Diocese. Springfield has asked to join us again this year for the retreat.

a. 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.

5. Hyannis Region one Conference-Refer to the Region One minutes submitted.

#### IV. 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. There were 30 men at the first Inquiry session. Next one is March 20, 2011.

#### V. Newsletter

A. New series on Contemporary Theologians and Spiritual Writers and Deacon Ministry, People of Christian Witness and a series on Religion and Science. There will also be a section on the Third Year Candidates, and stories from various deacons about why they felt called to the ministry and how it has impacted their lives.

VI. Wives- I have discussed with the Archbishop a plan to survey the wives and widows of deacons. Mrs. Johnna Gurr and Ms. Marcia Romanowsky have submitted a draft proposal to me, and I showed it to the Archbishop. He was fine with it.

Respectfully submitted,  
Deacon Bob Pallotti, Director