

Council of the Conference of Deacons

Archdiocese of Hartford

September 24, 2011

Holy Angels– South Meriden

In attendance: Deacons: Joe Guzauckas, Neil Richter, Joe Ryzewski, Donna Yatcko, Steve Yatcko, Tim Healy, Ed Taddei, Gene Nebiolo, Nick Genovese

Meeting was called to order at 9:00 am by Tim and an opening prayer was offered by Steve.

Minutes: The minutes for the 5/21/2011 meeting were read and then accepted.

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

Deacon's Wives Report: Donna reported on plans over the next 6 months including: Oct. 15 - Day of prayer, in November she will talking to the wives of condidates who will be ordained in June 2012, Dec 3- retreat in Enders Island, March 3 - Retreat at Caritas Center for deacon wives and also a day of Prayer conducted by Shawnee Baldwin on the Rosary for the Candidate's wives. In August there was a lunch for widows. Donna is working with Tim to develop a website for wives which will post upcoming events, registration, requests for prayers, etc. The website will go live next week.

Old Business (Excluding projects)

- Regional Coordinators – No update available
- Trends (social, priests, seminarians, lay ministry,) – No update available
- Implementation of Appreciative Inquiry model – No update available

Projects

- Vocations – Steve will reconvene the Committee to consider long range plans. Tim said that Bob had mentioned that that the Archbishop is willing to have classes up to 20 persons. It would be good to survey candidates where they heard about the Diaconate. It was also suggested that we continue to speak at men's retreats and gathering about the Diaconate (i.e. We shouldn't just wait for the next time the Program is geared up in 2013. The Lord's call never ends.)
- Collaboration – Tim is to follow-up with Father May on this initiative (e.g. Hartford Hospital) and report back to us.
- Retired Deacons – A survey has been conducted. Tim noted that it is important for Deaneries to take care of their members. (e.g. Give a call) There is also interest in having an annual gathering of those retired arranged by the Director. The statistics suggest the following underlying realities:

- Retired deacons **DO** want to be contacted
- The preferred mode of contact is phone (38%) and by letter (25%). In-person and e-mail contacts were not popular
- An annual or semi-annual event for retired deacons was desired. Daytime was overwhelmingly preferred.

Discussion followed. It emerged that the Diaconate Office should do the annual event. Taking care of retired deacons in the deanery was deemed to be the responsibility of deacons in the deanery, not the Diaconate Office.

- Diaconal Spirituality – Nick distributed materials about various forms of prayer available. (e.g., Centering Prayer, Lectio Divina, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, selected books.) He suggested we could start on one type and build upon it. He noted that we owe it to ourselves to ‘make time’. Others also shared their experiences in other forms of spiritual development through Cursillo and other forms of prayer. Mention was made of the possibility of having a centering prayer workshop at Holy Family akin to what the wives enjoyed.

New Business

- Deanery Revitalization Project adding:
 - Service to retired deacons
 - Director communication. - We need additional input and direction from the Director’s office to make deacons aware of expectations, responsibilities and accountability. This includes support by the Archbishop for the mission and purpose of Deaneries. A strategy exercise like the one we did for the CCOD would be a good step
 - Project recommendations – Donna suggested that deacons talk to candidates about what Deaneries and the Conference are about. (i.e. Their mission, resources for mutual support and Personal Development
 - Contemplative outreach spirituality
 - Interfaith Initiatives – Build mutual understanding and respect

COD Strategy Part 4

- Identity – The COD 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 – Is twofold

- 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 happening in the life of the larger church that affects them.
- 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 COD doesn't share in 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 COD 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.
- Goals – They are to:
 - Support the Archbishop in the serving of 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 and deanery revitalization)
 - Encourage growth of the Diaconate (continue vocations project)

Step 5 – Initiatives and Approaches

Director's Report:

Open Discussion

- Several persons reported favorably about the "6 Dates" program. Doing programs like this might be a good project for deaneries to undertake.
- The January 14, 2012 meeting **will** be conducted on line. It was suggested that provisions be made for others who might want to call in for meetings held in Meriden. (e.g. retired, sick). Perhaps those without the appropriate resources could find a nearby deacon "buddy" for the conference.
- Tim noted that his reign is coming to end next year and will confirm if Ken DosSantos, president elect, will be available to serve. [Tim has sent an e-mail to Ken asking him that question].

- Tim talked about the importance of having dialogues with other faith denominations (i.e. Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Islamic) to gain a better understanding. Ed asked if he could send out a copy of Pope Benedict's address to German Muslims and he was encouraged to do so.
- Joe G asked if Deaneries should have a budget. Some Deaneries solicit from their members. The Diaconate office will reimburse for speakers.
- Joe R suggested that Father Dolan and Father Donahue be invited to a meeting to discuss their plans and we can share ours.

Closing Prayer – Offered by Nick

Next Meeting is 11/12/11

Director's Report for the Conference of Deacons

Hartford

Sept. 24, 2011

I. Developments in Cont. Ed.

- Spirituality Day Dec. 10- Mary of the Magnificat
- Establishment of a Courage Chapter is underway.
- April 9, Ministry to People with Same Sex Attraction at St. Thomas Seminary.
- Annual Convocation on July 31 was a success. The money was sent to the Hole In the Wall Gang Camp for the purpose of purchasing a gas grill for the campers. The organization expressed their utmost gratitude for the generosity of the Deacon Community.
- April 20, 2012 Workshop on Homiletics with Brandon Nappi
- We established a committee for the introduction of the Third Roman Missal for the Archdiocese of Hartford. We hosted Fr. Paul Turner to speak to the priests, deacons and lay people in April at Holy Family Retreat Center. In June Msgr. Marrony offered a presentation to the Archdiocese on the Third Roman Missal
- Fall of 2011 the Deacons attended a workshop on Pastoral Issues in Marriage and the new FACET inventory conducted by the Family Life Office.
- Ministry to people with same sex attractions is going forward. The Archbishop approved of all our requests concerning the communication of the existence of Courage to priest and the Archdiocese. Deacon Bob spoke with Maria Zone about how we might make this well-known.
- The emerging relationship between religion and science May 5, 2012- internationally respected Roman Catholic Theologian, Dr. John Haught of Georgetown University will present a workshop on Religion and Science :Spirituality for the 21st Century at St. Thomas Seminary. He will respond to the "New Atheists" as well as discuss the relevant overlap of religion and science
- Interreligious understanding and action will be explored further.
- Dealing with Loss will be a topic for the next academic year.
- Ministry to those with addictions will be offered the next academic year as well.
- We will need to make sure we have a good speaker for a workshop on bioethics for the Fall of 2012.
- Coordinating efforts with the Office of Catholic Social Justice Ministries and Catholic Charities is something Deacon bob is discussing with both offices.

Formation Issues

- The Archbishop is open to having 20 deacon candidates in a class.
- The Archbishop is supportive of the expansion of the deacon newsletter as a vehicle to explore the spiritual, academic, human, emotional and psychological formation of the deacons.
- There are a number of pastors that wish to have deacons that have not been able to get one due to local deacon shortages.
- At present we have 14 candidates for 2012 ordination, 11 for 2014 and 14 Aspirants.