

**Deacon Council Meeting
December 10, 2010
St. Mark Catholic Center**

Meeting called to order: 3:58 PM

Attendees: Msgr. Robert Smith, Jerry & Denise Sobrowski, Steve & Vicki Washek, Bob Ball, Jim McGuinness, Tim Good, Bill Saborsky.

Opening Prayer: Steve Washek.

- Retreat Discussion:
 - Due to the inclement weather, Bill & Pat Sproveri were unable to attend this meeting. The discussion was tabled for another time.
- Council Constitution:
 - Msgr. Smith would like to finalize the document and submit it to the Bishop for his approval.
 - Question in regards to the representation on the council by numbers in each vicariate. Vicki Washek discussed the aspects of what percentage of deacons and wives are in each vicariate. Each vicariate will have their own representation on the council. This will need to change as the numbers of the deacon community continues to expand.
 - Jerry Sobrowski will send the redacted constitution to the council members for review and final approval.
 - Council to send suggestions and comments prior to next meeting and this will be forwarded to Msgr. Smith.
 - There was a question on the whole of the community voting on candidates in election.
 - Time of election: May 2011 as is written in the constitution.
 - Electronic ballots will be utilized.
 - Bill Saborsky voiced concern about getting information to the community for the election.
 - Bob Ball raised the issue of the “senior deacons” in each deanery. This program did not have a good response.
 - The communication issue needs to be addressed, Joe Cicero’s invitation to act as this communication representative.
 - Msgr. Smith suggested a monthly comment on the constitution and election to the community by each of the council members via the internet.
 - Bob Ball will develop a flow chart of the communication needs and structure for the community.
 - Bob Ball will also contact Joe Cicero in regards to the needed tasks of this project.
 - Side Note: Msgr. Smith suggests the formation of a small committee to address the format of the Emmaus Convocation for deacons. Council is to email suggestions to Msgr. Smith by the end of January 2011.
- Continuing education:

- Jim McGuinness will be scheduling a one day event at St. Mark's on March 26, 2011.
 - Suggested name for this event is "Corrections and Care".
 - Speakers to include:
 - Ralph DeCecco – Prison Ministry
 - William McCarthy – Stairways
 - Brenda Newport – Women's Mercy Center
- Jim also suggests using the Emmaus Convocation for continuing education using topics such as exegesis of the gospels.
- Deacon Policy Manual
 - Bill Saborsky reemphasized the focus on the Continuing Education Policy. There is a need to update the current email lists and send emails with a return receipt requested. A handout from Bill was given to the council concerning a draft email to be sent to the community. There needs to be an emphasis on the urgency of this aspect of the policy. An outline of responsibilities is necessary.
 - Tim Good suggested that this emphasis on continuing education be part of the formation process to help inform the community prior to ordination.
 - Msgr. Smith related that there has been some consideration of needing credentials and education for the deacon formation program. There was discussion in regards to offering a certificate for diaconal ministry and a pathway for a master's degree in pastoral ministry. Discussion with Gannon University will occur in this regard. Deacon Marty Eisert has also expressed an interest in this process.
 - Steve Washek also had concern for the spiritual formation path and its inclusion in this process. There is a need for continued spiritual direction within the community.
 - A general discussion occurred in regards to the attitudes of deacons after ordination in regards to education and spiritual formation.
 - Steve Washek suggested a re-emphasis of the expectations of deacons at the Emmaus Convocation.
- Side Note: There was a suggestion for some days of reflection for the community. Bob Ball, Steve Washek and Tim Good will organize a day during the 2011 Lenten season.

Action Items:

1. Review constitution and return comments to Jerry by January 2011.
2. Compose monthly comments on the constitution and election by each member of the committee.
3. Return suggestions for Emmaus Convocation for deacons to Msgr. Smith by end of January 2011.

Meeting adjourned: 5:00 PM