

Minutes of the Diocesan Pastoral Council
November 30, 2018
(Feast of St. Andrew, Apostle)

Bishop Taylor opened the meeting with prayer at 2:00 p.m.

In Attendance

Bishop Anthony B. Taylor	Sr. Norma E. Muñoz, MCP	Dr. Karen Hollenbeck
Msgr. Scott Friend	Sr. Mary C. Bezner, OSB	Jeff Hines
Msgr. Francis I. Malone	Dcn. Efraín Vargas	Paul James
Dcn. Matt Glover	Cynthia Solis	Roberto Martínez
Dennis Lee	Lloyd Cambre	
Greg Wolfe	Alma Stewart	

Not Present

Adrian Dominguez

Observers

Dennis Lee invited Aprille Hanson, associate editor of Arkansas Catholic, as she is working on an article about the Diocesan Pastoral Council. Bishop Taylor invited Fr. Salvador Vega-Alvarenga, Spiritual Director for Hispanic Catholic Charismatic Renewal to observe this first meeting.

Introduction

Bishop Taylor said he has decided on two initiatives to increase the voice of the laity at the diocesan level. One is to include two people who are not priests on the Clergy Personnel Board: Dcn. Matt Glover and Dr. Sherry Simon. They've attended the last couple of meetings and have shared their perspective. The second is to form a Diocesan Pastoral Council. This Council has now been established according to the Code of Canon Law. Canon 511 states that "In every diocese and to the extent that pastoral circumstances suggest it, a pastoral council is to be constituted which under the authority of the bishop investigates, considers, and proposes practical conclusions about those things which pertain to the pastoral works in the diocese."

Bishop Taylor stated that the purpose of the Diocesan Pastoral Council is to advise him regarding decisions he needs to make for the pastoral care of the diocese. He mentioned that he also consults with and receives advice from the Presbyteral Council, Diocesan Finance Council, and the Review Board among others.

The Diocesan Pastoral Council is composed of *ex-officio* non-voting members, appointed by Bishop Taylor: Vicar General, Chancellors for Ecclesial Affairs, Canonical Affairs, Administrative Affairs, Diocesan Finance Officer, and the Director of Hispanic Ministry; they are members of the diocesan staff and will be providing information/resources to voting members of the Council. Representatives of the following groups/organizations were elected to serve in this Council: Deacons, Youth and Young Adults, Knights of Columbus, Council for Black Catholics, and Religious; they are voting members of the council. Five additional members have been appointed by Bishop Taylor to serve in the Council to better reflect the demographics of the diocese. They are also voting members and Bishop Taylor said the idea is

to meet and discuss the same matters that are brought to the Presbyteral Council, and to get input from both sources. The Council will meet on the same week as Presbyteral Council. The term of office is for three years, renewable indefinitely.

Members introduced themselves, and shared their involvement in the church. They expressed how honored and privileged they feel to be part of the Diocesan Pastoral Council. Bishop Taylor expressed his gratitude for the sacrifice they're making by agreeing to serve, especially those who are driving a great distance to be here.

Time was given to review the Constitution. The following changes were recommended:

Article VII

1. To meet at least quarterly instead of monthly; everyone agreed.
4. The Council will still meet even if there is no quorum.
5. Decisions was changed to Recommendations so that it now reads, "Recommendations of the Council normally shall be reached by means of consensus." Everybody agreed.

Mr. Roberto Martínez suggested that a member be allowed to miss three meetings, excused or unexcused. Bishop Taylor indicated that after missing three meetings, members will be contacted to find out if they would like to continue to serve on the Council.

Bishop Taylor said that Approval of the revised Draft Constitution will be taken up at the next meeting in January 2019.

The following items were discussed with the Presbyteral Council on November 29, 2018, and were discussed with the Diocesan Pastoral Council in this meeting:

Respect Life and Continuing Challenges

Bishop Taylor didn't participate in this year's March for Life because the keynote speaker pushed to secure the execution of eight inmates last year, which lacks a consistent ethic on life, and is contradictory to the right to life. Bishop Taylor has reached out to Rose Mimms, Director of Arkansas Right to Life, to ask that the speaker for next year's Rally for Life be someone more suitable for supporting the pro-life ministry.

There will be a single Mass for Life in January at the Robinson Auditorium at 12 noon, which will be preceded by adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, and a Eucharistic Procession before in Riverfront Park.

Update on Clergy Sexual Abuse disclosures, Kinsale Management, etc.

Deacon Matt Glover reported the Kinsale Management Consulting group began its work on November 9, and they are continuing their review of personnel files. Kinsale's findings will be brought before the Review Board and Bishop Taylor, and the Diocese will notify everyone once the Kinsale review process is complete.

Mr. Jeff Hines commented that all communication from the diocese regarding the sexual abuse crisis has been transparent and well done. He encourages the diocese to continue to communicate proactively. Dcn. Glover will meet with the Attorney General's office after the

completion of Kinsale's investigation. Bishop Taylor mentioned that the news media is not hostile to the Church in Arkansas.

V Encuentro: Hispanic Ministry going forward

Sr. Norma E. Muñoz, MCP gave a report on the V Encuentro process and shared additional information on key demographic, social, and religious statistics for the Diocese of Little Rock. Sr. Norma has led the diocesan V Encuentro Process, which began four years ago. The goal of the V Encuentro is to discern ways in which the Church in the U.S. can better respond to the Hispanic/Latino presence, and to strengthen the ways in which Hispanic/Latinos respond to the call to the New Evangelization as missionary disciples serving the entire Church. Pope Francis calls us to go out and reach out to those in the peripheries. The V Encuentro is a process of evangelization, communion, and consultation. As part of the V Encuentro process, participants were able to meet in small groups throughout the diocese to assess the needs of the Hispanic Community, to visit inmates, to evangelize, to attend parish, diocesan, regional, and national Encounters, and to complete a Diocesan Working Document. The V Encuentro process continues, and a final working document will become available in April 2019. All information on V Encuentro is available in English and Spanish.

Bishop Taylor asked what changes need to be made in Hispanic Ministry going forward. Sr. Norma expressed that there are four priority areas: Formation at all levels (liturgical, moral, doctrinal) and the need for leaders to be formed; Youth Ministry, especially for the 2nd and 3rd generations; Family Life, which includes promoting the dignity of women, family values, marriage counseling, etc.; and Immigration, which includes attending to the needs of the poor by offering resources and support, workshops on financial education, food pantries, etc. She also expressed the need to work together to find a way to create a plan of action (collaborative ministry). Mr. Lloyd Cambre, Knights of Columbus Representative, expressed the challenge they're facing of enrolling Hispanic men to become members of their local councils. The Knights of Columbus are developing a recruitment plan and will share it with Sr. Norma. Mr. Martínez expressed his concern on Immigration, which has affected families and farmworkers; and the need for information to be communicated to the communities. Msgr. Scott Friend recommended that the Diocesan Hispanic Council resume their meetings as this is a way to relay information to the Hispanic community about resources available to them. Also, Msgr. Friend emphasized the shift in demographics for Catholics in the Diocese where the percentage of our Catholic population who are Hispanic will only increase over the next 10 – 15 years, the need to form Hispanic leaders and get them involved in boards and leadership positions, and the need to develop a way to mentor and prepare them. A priority is to identify people who would be good representatives in different boards, and be leaders of the community. One challenge is to empower Hispanic/Latinos to become good leaders, and to speak up on social issues and current needs.

Aprille Hanson mentioned that the Arkansas Catholic is discussing different ways to reach out to the Hispanic community through the diocesan newspaper.

Schedule of Future Meetings

Bishop Taylor proposed a list of future meeting dates for 2019, and they were approved by all Council members as follows: January 25, April 12, August 2, and October 25. The meetings will take place at 11:00 a.m. at the St. John Center in Little Rock. Lunch will be provided after the meetings.

Election of Officers (1-year term)

Bishop Taylor asked for nominations for Chairperson of the Diocesan Pastoral Council. *Ex-officio* members may not be elected as officers. Mr. Jeff Hines was nominated and approved by acclamation to serve as the Chairperson.

Bishop Taylor asked for nominations for a Vice Chairperson. Miss Cynthia Solis was nominated and approved by acclamation to serve as the Vice-Chairperson.

Other items

Msgr. Friend and Sr. Mary Clare Bezner, OSB, shared information about the upcoming discernment retreats for men and women. *Come and See* Discernment retreat for men will take place at St. John Center in Little Rock on December 28-29, 2018; the Women's Religious Vocation Discernment retreat will take place at St. John Center in Little Rock on January 25-26, 2019.

The next meeting is scheduled for 11:00 a.m., January 25, 2019.

Bishop Taylor expressed his gratitude to all members of the Diocesan Pastoral Council and closed the meeting with the Lord's Prayer.

Meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.
Respectfully submitted,
María Velázquez, Secretary to
Bishop of Little Rock