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## PRESBYTERAL COUNCIL REPORT DIOCESE OF SPRINGFIELD

**TO:** Active, Retired and Religious Priests

**FROM:** Office of the Chancellor

**DATE:** March 8, 2020

**RE:** Summary Report of the February 4, 2020 Presbyteral Council Meeting

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The following topics were presented and discussed at the February 4, 2020 Presbyteral Council Meeting held at the Bishop Marshall Center.

### **DIOCESAN GUIDELINES FOR PARISH CATECHESIS**

- Celeste Labbe, Diocesan Director of the Office of Faith Formation, spoke to the Presbyteral Council about the updates her office made to the Diocesan Guidelines for Parish Catechesis.
- The revisions mostly included revising the language to make it more user friendly, and the deletion of several offices in the diocese that no longer exist. The safe environment section has been updated.
- The goal is to have the policy manual available in March. The changes to the policy were approved by the council.

### **DEANERY REPORTS**

#### *Hampden West Deanery*

- The deanery asked for guidelines for parishes in light of the flu season and the coronavirus. Bishop will issue a letter to address this issue.
- The issue of church safety and security was also an issue raised by the deanery. Discussion followed on the importance of issuing safety and security guidelines in the diocese. Bishop suggested that a church safety and security training be available to the diocese once a year.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **NOTIFICATION OF CLERGY ASSIGNMENT CHANGES VIA EMAIL**

- There may be the possibility in the near future for each priest to have a diospringfield.org email account that notifies all the priests of changes in assignment for priests.

### **FR. JACK ROACH'S HAITI PROPOSAL**

- The Presbyteral Council decided not to undertake this project as a diocese but suggested that Fr. Roach approach a few parishes to partner the Diocese of Les Cayes, Haiti.

### **MEN AND WOMEN CONFERENCE (CATHOLIC LIFE CONFERENCE)**

- Fr. Michael Pierz gave a presentation to help boost the numbers of participants at the Catholic Life Conference. In the past, the men's and women's conference were separate events, and this was another way to invite all in the diocese to come together to celebrate the Catholic faith.
- One way to promote this conference is by adding the intentions of the conference to the Prayers of the Faithful. Each parish, according to its means, can help families attend the conference through a financial donation.

### **150<sup>TH</sup> DIOCESAN ANNIVERSARY**

- Msgr. Connelly issued updates to the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. Bishop will issue a personal invitation to parishes and there will be an open house in the Bishop Marshall Center.

### **CLERGY POLICY MANUAL**

- The procedures for priests in special standing were reviewed.
- The draft of the next sections of the policy manual were distributed. The sections include: Introduction from the Bishop; Job description for the Vicar of Clergy, Pastor, and Parochial Vicar; the Bylaws for the Presbyteral Council and Clergy Commission; the Code of Best Practices for Priests; Treatment of Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Chemical Dependencies; a Program for Consultation Services; a Checklist for first time Pastors; Common Rectory Living Discussion Items and Parish Finance Council.

### **DEANERY RESTRUCTURING**

Fr. Savage reported the CEFSC committee's three recommendations for the deanery restructuring:

- No change to the current deanery structure
- Review the proposed duties and responsibilities of a dean and vicar
- Bishop meet with newly elected deans and vicars to review and approve duties and responsibilities

- It is important that the Dean make a parish visit to help a pastor deal with ongoing maintenance of buildings.
- The dean needs to visit parishes in his deanery to ensure that parish records are being kept up to date. If they are not, they ought to notify the Bishop. The Deans and Vicars will meet to discuss this.

#### **SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR NEXT MEETING**

- Clergy Policy
- Safety Policy